



messing about in **BOATS**

Special Features This Issue
“In the Wake of Alexandre Dumas”
“Rich Man’s River” – “A Boating Adventure”

Volume 24 – Number 19

February 15, 2007



messing about in BOATS

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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Late in December our small, congenial group of BMW riding friends, Greg, Joe, John, and I, with riding season pretty well over, visited one of another of John's friend's acquaintances, another Bob, who had just acquired a Russian-made Ural sidecar motorcycle rig. In the course of the usual introductory "getting acquainted" conversation, when it came out that I edited and published a small boat magazine, Bob lit right up and immediately ushered me into an adjoining room to show me his lengthening shelf of boat building books. Here was another aspiring small boat builder tucked away on a quiet suburban street less than ten miles from me who was unaware of the existence of *MAIB*.

To my friends' relief, we two small boat enthusiasts, suddenly diverted from the main focus of the visit by this newly discovered common enthusiasm, returned to the admiring of modern Russian motorcycle technology, a copy of a 1960 era BMW which proved to still have agricultural grade construction details.

Subsequently I sent a couple of copies of *MAIB* to Bob along with several sidecar articles from my bygone motorcycle magazines. At the time of our visit I didn't have a chance to determine just where Bob proposed to build his first boat, an Adirondack Guideboat. His modern suburban home did have a large two-car garage but it was typically already full of stuff with barely room for the new Ural to find refuge from the weather.

A brief aside here about our compulsion to protect new motor vehicles from becoming soiled. Some time back, when friend John was agonizing over lacking workspace for his growing motorcycle collection, I pointed out that he had a perfectly good one car garage attached to his small suburban home, just leave his nearly new car in the driveway. The car gets used daily outdoors, sometimes in awful conditions, why put it away at night in a garage, thus wasting all that useful workspace? Sound familiar?

In a subsequent phone conversation with Bob it transpired that his summer weekends were almost totally devoted to renovating a summer place on a New Hampshire lake, renovations which included building a BOAT SHOP in which to com-

mence his dream project, hopefully this coming summer. What a setup that will be, a summer place on major lake with a boat shop at shoreside and a dream boat underway! All this came out after I had invited him to join us on some of our upcoming weekend motorcycling adventures with his new Ural and a chosen passenger. It appears that there just may be some agonizing for Bob over how best to spend any given Saturday once spring arrives.

This latest outreaching in my life to others who share my enthusiasms again reminded me of how it is when one has lived a long time, how things keep coming around again. My motorcycling years concluded back in 1983 when I had felt I had done all I wanted to do and small boats became my new focus, leading to this magazine. But they came around again in 2000 when friend John, long gone from my daily life, organized a reunion of a group of '70s riders and invited me. And so here I am back on bikes.

In the meantime, almost 30 years have now passed since I first became interested in small boats, learning to sail and discovering the adventure involved in buying that first boat and building a BOAT SHOP in which to renovate it. Bob's barely contained enthusiasm to get going on building his guideboat as soon as he finished building his BOAT SHOP brought back those same feelings within, it was the freshness of his enthusiasm that really grabbed me.

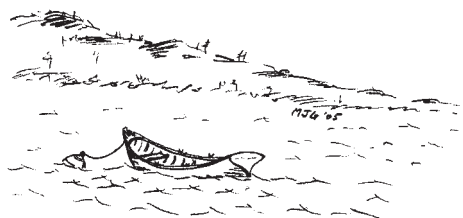
A long life indulging in chosen activities can lead to a jaded outlook, the old "been there, done that" thing. While I have no future intentions of any more boat building, I still have modest plans for some tinkering with my kayaks (sailing trimaran and pedal power). Exposure to the more youthful enthusiasm of younger people, keeping company with the 40s to 50s cohorts who have lived long enough to know what life is all about, is how I have fought off becoming jaded. I am fortunate to have been accepted into the lives of these younger men, in indulging in my enthusiasms they keep me going. And I, perhaps, give them hope for their future as they begin to contemplate the onset of "old age."

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On the Cover...

Reader Richard Winslow returns with another of his north woods canoe adventure reports, this one on the unique "Rich Man's River", the Restigouche in New Brunswick



From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman

Long ago there flourished an old, old farm in southern Connecticut. By the time I arrived, aged four days, the hen houses had been torn down, the 20 cows disposed of. The barn stood empty save for furtive wisps of hay sticking beneath the rafters. The hay tongs had gone. The wheeled hoist rusted quietly on its track beneath the ridge board. The truck and the tractor went to one farm, the team of Clydesdales to another.

However, two decrepit hay wagons remained intact, one behind the barn, the other beside the farm road a few hundred yards out back. I grew up playing on these. But one could drive imaginary teams only so far. After they'd run and run and run some more, they had to be fed and watered and groomed and put up for the night.

The brook down the hill was better. It never stopped running. Well, maybe in August if it hadn't rained for a month. By then the trout had all retreated upstream to the reservoir except for the ones I'd managed to catch and fry in the cast iron skillet. These brook trout grew small and extremely wild and never has any fish since tasted half so good. I spent my every spare minute learning to catch them. Those fat, complacent creatures they call trout and raise in concrete pools haven't the spunk or character or troutful "Je ne sais quoi" to develop flavor.

A few small frogs and water striders and minnows and, once in a while, an anadromous little eel, complemented the trout. It was damp and cool and shady by the brook. Huge sycamores and maples towered above and dappled the valley with shady greens and browns and blacks and patches of light that glinted from the bits of quartz beneath the sparkling water. The brook devoted its energy to churn and gurgle and frolic along the edge of our property and spilled into the river beyond.

The two abandoned dams below our house no longer held back water. One spanned the stream but the central stones had tumbled from their places. The lower dam consisted of a jutting wall that stopped where it met the brook. The rock had been used to build the bridge abutments. Flumes and mill foundations could not be found.

The road beside our farmhouse received paving in the '40s. Beyond the barn, down Stonehouse Hill, and crossing Hungerford's Brook, it remained unimproved. The road and bridge were still passable as I grew up, some days three cars went by. A local lad driving a tractor made from a model A Ford went down the hill with a load of hay behind him, dropped into a gluttonous rut, heaved on the jerking wheel, and hopped the bank. Fortunately his tractor fetched up against a tree, shaken, he stumbled away. The town closed Stonehouse Hill.

After that, nothing more could interrupt my idyll. The road grew over, the plank deck on the little bridge rotted away. Between the sturdy drywall piers flowed a shady pool nearly waist deep at center, a deliciously cool refuge from the summer. Except during freshets one could squat on the water-smoothed rock in the stream above the pool, mesmerized by the age-old song of water over stone.

The wooden railings on the bridge fell down. I discovered, quickly, which of the mossy planks would bear my weight. In '82, after a week of torrential rains, we had a terrific flood. Farther up the swollen stream, dams burst. Logs and boulders crashed through the valley all night. Eight feet of water scoured its way to the river. Beside the barn a hundred precipitous feet above the torrent, the steep bank trembled. The bridge disintegrated. The dry wall abutments vanished in the night. The steel beams lodged among the trees downstream. The pool clogged. The wary trout departed. But by then I had outgrown that world. As I am slowly, assuredly, outgrowing this one.

Some Colonial lad once played about this millpond as his father worked the mill. Some Pequot lass, a mere 500 springs ago, collected trout lilies here on this bank where the standing half of our hugest maple rots. A different trout, a different frog, disported themselves in this new brook shaped by the glacier, a mere 15 millennia gone by. And someday I shall wade this brook in ages yet to come, still trying to ignore the strident cries of my father up the hill, calling me home to supper and my bed.

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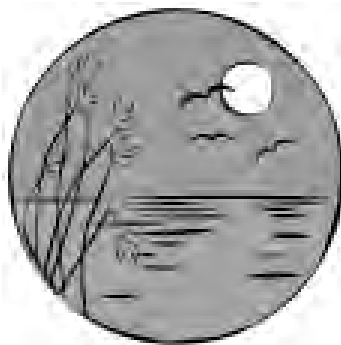
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Window on the Water

By Chris Kaiser

Christmas Seals 2006

Christmas Day dawned with the fractured glints and glimmers of a sun piercing the low laying clouds that hugged the horizon. We've had an odd autumn, wide swings in temperatures have given each new day a different appearance. Within the months of November and December we have experienced sultry days reminiscent of August, not autumn. The next day the Polar Express would roar into town and make heading to work a feat almost on par with Admiral Byrd's last trip to the Pole.

Mother Nature certainly must be a middle-aged lady, as she was suffering hot flashes, turning on the AC, then feeling the need to crank up the thermostat. Like the temperatures, her whims on how she dressed each morning were all over the place. Some mornings she was a bit frumpy and stayed in bed behind the fluffy gray duvet of moisture-laden clouds. After a few days of sulking, she'd fling off the blahs and wrap herself in gaily colored scarves of hot pink and brilliant orange.

The sky reflected her exuberance and the birds out on the sound took their cues from her mood and were at once more chatty, calling out the local gossip between the large rafts of gulls and ducks.

Terns swooped and dived into the sparkling water, skimming along to snatch up the small tasty bait fish rising to investigate the rainbow hues reflected on the surface.



COMPASS ROSE REVIEW

"Views and Reviews from the Coast of Maine"

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Long-legged shore birds darted back and forth to dip rapier-like beaks into the sand.

Boaters came and went during the fair weather, from the beat-up Lunds favored by clammers and hunters to small nimble day sailers. During some of the days when Mother was in a snit and tossing the water about with gusty sighs and petulant huffs of wind from the northeast, the sailboarders would clamber over the marsh grass along Eagle Hill Cove to launch into the micro gales. Watching from my window the boarders who leaped and cavorted between Pavilion Beach and Sandy Point made my knees and shoulders ache in sympathy.

Now and then a larger craft would chug through the empty mooring field and leave a long, sinuous V-wave in its wake. A few hardy jet ski riders came out one fine afternoon to spin and cut up the mirrored surface. Like kids let out of school these three hared about using the few remaining buoys as pylons to mark an imaginary race course.

I dislike the noise and oftentimes inconsiderate behavior of many operators, but this exhibition of pure joy and "larkin' about" as my grandmother would say, brought a grin to my face and a memory of the Captain and me renting a double jet ski on Captiva. Down on the warm southern waters, getting wet and then rushing through the cool breeze was exhilarating. On the December bay out front now, even with wet suits, you'd be hard pressed to stay comfortable. The sun belied the fact that the temperature was only in the low 40s.

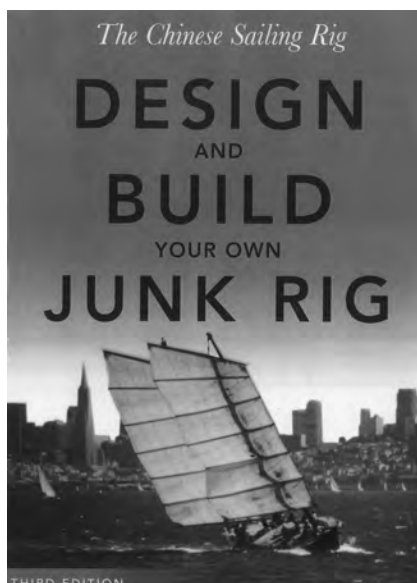
Soon enough most Messers have given up and put their water craft up for the next few months. A few hardheaded hunters can still be heard as their trailers bounce over the rocky shore to launch into the cold predawn water. The reverberating boom of their guns wakes me and I snuggle deeper into my down comforter. Each shot seems to bring winter closer.

Christmas morning confirmed the fact that despite the oddities of recent meteorological events, winter has indeed arrived. The clouds split and the rising sun shot glorious fractal patterns across the skittering waves. The rocks at the day beacon emerged, glistening in the light.

Wait a minute, that rock looks out of place, there's another one and it just moved! As the light grew stronger the forms of our transient seal family coalesced into a bumptious group made up of the solid older (grandparents?) and slimmer adults. Restlessly moving between the larger bodies were two small chubby paddlers.

How long they'll stay in the bay will depend on the fishing, but like the 10:03 train to Newburyport, the seals operate on a schedule. That the schedule is more flexible than the commuter rail doesn't change the fact that on a larger scale they are "right on time." Winter hasn't begun in the eight years I've been watching them until the seals haul out and rest on the rocks marked by the beacon. Within a few days we got a good dose of extraordinary cold and windy conditions, everything until this point has been a rehearsal for the long, dark months ahead.

Having passed the solstice in a fit of cold rainy weather, and knowing the next few months are bound to be colder and meaner, can't take away my happiness to have spotted our seals on Christmas morning. There can be no better gift than that of the Christmas Seals.



The Chinese Sailing Rig Design and Build Your Own Junk Rig

By Derek Van Loan

Paperback – 112pp – 5.2" x 7.9" – \$18.95

B&W photos and drawings

Published by Paradise Cay Publications

P.O. Box 29, Arcata, CA 94418

Review by Stuart K. Hopkins

The Chinese junk rig, in various permutations, continues to interest a few western sailors and messers in spite of drawbacks like complexity of rigging, weight aloft, and less than brilliant performance to windward.

The rig's economy of construction and extreme ease of shortening sail (those heavy battens bring the sail down where it lies doggo in all that rigging) has made the junk rig popular among a small group of long distance voyagers; Annie Hill of *Badger* fame and Blondie Hassler's converted Folkboat *Jester* come to mind. Designer and sailor Tom Colvin popularized the rig on a number of western hulls, notably sharpie types like his *Gazelle*. Phil Bolger has drawn several variations of the junk rig, combining its good features with those of the gaff rig to come up with what he has dubbed a "Chinese gaffer."

Van Loan's contribution to junk rig literature (a revision of the 1993 edition which was a revision of his 1981 edition) is a basic, very practical guide to designing and building Chinese lug rigs and sails with clear, specific instructions on how to proceed: design of the rig, spars, sails, rigging details (plenty of those on a junk!), and notes on handling the rig underway. Drawings clarify everything. By far the handiest and most cost-effective introduction to the subject in print. The British magazine *Classic Boat* reviewed the book this way, "...squeezes into a small paperback what Hassler and McLeod did in a large hardback. Van Loan manages to get a lot of information over remarkably well."

Curiously, the author gets caught slightly aback early in the book when he defines the Chinese junk sail as "a fully battened standing lug sail..." which it is not. Chinese lug sails are balanced lug sails; i.e., with the



Book Review

boom (and all the battens) projecting significantly forward of the mast. Standing lug sails have the tack at, or behind, the mast. With this lapse behind him, however, Van Loan sails on without further mishap.

Of special interest to readers of *MAIB* will be a few pages on adapting the junk sail to very small boats, like a decked canoe and Chesapeake Bay crabbing skiff, with sketches of simplified geometry for such small sails and ideas for the relatively simple sail-making involved.

Fortunately for amateurs who decide to make a Chinese junk sail, the sailmaking is simple. No edge curves (except a little hollowing of the leech between battens to prevent flutter), no panel shaping or broad seams, just a perfectly flat sail with the cloths arranged to fill each space between the battens. What's fortunate for the amateur is unfortunate for the professional, who grits his teeth while he tries to heed the warning in Tom Colvin's self-published *Sailmaking, Making Chinese and Other Sails*:

"I have seen several Chinese sails ruined by professional western sailmakers trying to cut some draft into the sail... Do not even be tempted to commit this error." The sailmaker, of course, would like to see a way to exercise his art and create a junk sail with a more elegant airfoil, but the odds seem against him. Here are the experts on junk sail aerodynamics:

Van Loan: "Because the airfoil shape of the Chinese lug sail derives solely from the battens, the sail cloth is cut flat... Battens that are not stiff enough... will produce a baggy shape. This will be OK in a light breeze for windward work, but when the wind strengthens, the vessel will not go well to windward... It is better to have battens that are too stiff than too slinky."

Blondie Hassler and Jock McLeod (*Practical Junk Rig*) conclude that "... with the wind on or forward of the beam the battens should be well arched in ghosting weather and should get progressively flatter as the wind speed increases." But they immediately point out the sad fact, "This is the exact opposite of the natural behavior of battens and we have as yet no way of (correcting) it."

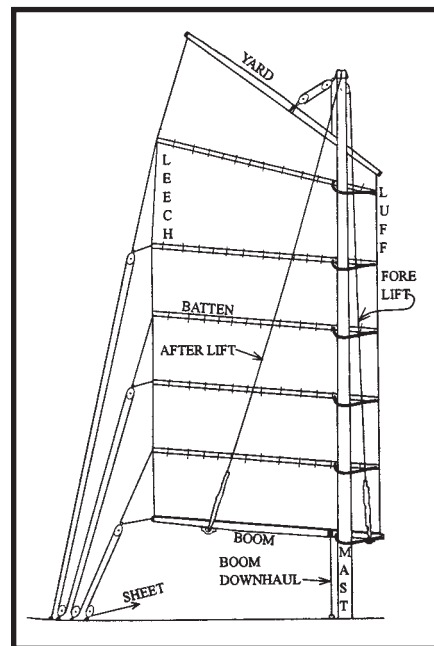
Phil Bolger agrees (in *100 Small Boat Rigs*) that "it's almost impossible to make these sails take up a good aerodynamic shape..."

For a more optimistic view of the junk rig's abilities, see David Nichols' *Working Guide to Traditional Small Boat Sails* (reviewed in *MAIB*, January 15, 2007). In his chapter on the Chinese lugs' he suggests, "For the owner-builder wanting a weatherly,

efficient, and easily handled sailing rig, the Chinese lug sail is a good choice."

Van Loan appends a glossary of general and junk-special nautical terms and an eclectic reading list (including *MAIB*, which he calls "An all-round good magazine").

Online, <http://www2.friend.ly.net/~dadadata/junks.html> will take you to Craig O'Donnell's very interesting and beautifully illustrated tutorial on junk sails. Googling junk rig, Chinese junk sails, etc., will take you into the hinterland and beyond.



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Almost Written Robb 20 Times or More

When Robb White was still alive I must have almost written him 20 times or more. Our paths had crossed in some really out of the way places like Valdosta and Thomasville, Georgia, and Apalachicola and Cedar Key, Florida. I also grew up in Florida hunting and fishing out of wooden boats. I'm sorry I missed him but appreciate every chance I get to know him vicariously through *MAIB*. Thank you.

I guess, other than Chris Crafts and Garwoods, there must be a prohibition on wooden boats in Texas, particularly North Texas. I never see any activity up this way. Too bad, I would show up.

Thanks again for you great little magazine.
Jim Rester, Keller, TX

Information of Interest..

Your Current EPIRBs are Prohibited

A Coast Guard press release stated, "The Coast Guard reminds all boaters that beginning January 1, 2007, both 121.5 and 243 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) are prohibited from use in both commercial and recreational watercraft. Boaters wishing to have an emergency rescue beacon aboard their vessel must have a digital 406 MHz model.

The January 1, 2007, date to stop using 121.5 MHz EPIRBs is in preparation for February 1, 2009, when satellite processing of distress signals from all 121.5/243 MHz beacons will terminate. Following this termination date, only the 406 MHz beacons will be detected by the International Cospas-Sarsat Satellite System which provides distress alert and location data for search and rescue operations around the world.

The regulation applies to all Class A, B, and S 121.5/243 MHz EPIRBs. It does not affect 121.5/243 MHz man overboard devices that are designed to work directly with a base alerting unit only and not with the satellite system.

This change, in large part, was brought about by the unreliability of the 121.5/243 MHz beacons in an emergency situation. Data reveals that with a 121.5 MHz beacon, only one alert out of every 50 is a genuine distress situation. This has a significant effect on expending the limited resources of search and rescue personnel and platforms.

With 406 MHz beacons, false alerts have been reduced significantly and, when properly registered, can usually be resolved with a telephone call to the beacon owner. Consequently, real alerts can receive the attention they deserve.

When a 406 MHz. beacon signal is received, search and rescue personnel can retrieve information from a registration database. This includes the beacon owner's contact information, emergency contact information, and vessel/aircraft identifying characteristics. Having this information allows the Coast Guard, or other rescue personnel, to respond appropriately."

Chuck Sutherland, Green Lane, PA

About Under Ten Feet

Under Ten Feet is a two-page newsletter I have launched about boats under ten feet on waterline. This started years ago when my daughters were five and seven. I built a Pointy Skiff for the three of us since it has high sides and rows easily. There was room for both Rachel and April to row at the same time while the old man had the tiller. That changed soon enough, as you can imagine. Then I put a sail on it. That really got their interest. That was 20 years ago.

A few months ago I built an Eric Sponberg eight-footer he called Halfling. A lousy name but a great little sailer/paddler. I was out on a lake here in Dallas when a few dads and kids came up to me to ask about this boat I called *Little Swan*. I got an offer to sell and to tell the dads how I built it. I found out several dads had spent \$1,000-3,000 on molded or fiberglass boats that the kids didn't like as much as my plywood and house paint *Swan*. They were too heavy and one model from a well-known manufacturer had no provision for rowing. Gas is not good for kids to be inhaling. They should be feeling the wind and imagining white schooners in a blue cove.

So I put this newsletter together for them to read about different designs they could build out of plywood and paint. I feature a well-known design one month, then a little-known design the next. I mix instant boats with traditional ladder frame planked boats. I have spent many hours searching the web for out-of-the-way designs, some from people who aren't professional designers but have a different idea. The graphics are about the same as a study plan from Dynamite Payson.

I'm just learning the tricks of this new Printshop software, I'm like a boy with a new toy.

What I can do is offer a free issue to any *MAIB* reader.

Paul Austin, Box 670849, Dallas, TX 75367, Sail389@aol.com.

Opinions..

Old Tools Represent the Zenith

In regards to Dave Jackson's article "The Decline of Edge Tools," I share his experience. Finding a quality anything in a big box store is a struggle at best and nonexistent when it comes to edge tools. As a carpenter (aspiring boat builder) and the grandson of a carpenter, I have developed a deep appreciation for woodworking tools that don't scream or throw wood chips into my face.

Once you have gone through the learning curve, edge tools are a wonderful addition to all these howling monsters that pass for tools today (OK, they do have their place). The decline that Mr. Jackson has noted unfortunately extends beyond the sad metallurgy of edge tools. Aside from a handful of modern manufacturers, some of whom were mentioned in the article, the competition for manufactured goods is based on the cheapest price.

The old tools so many of us love, to me, represent the zenith of American manufacturing. They come from a time when the quality of the product and its ease of use was para-

mount. Fortunately many of these tools were carefully preserved and are available for those of us who have the interest, and patience, to clean them up and put them to work. Somehow using a tuned-up hand plane or spoke shave just feels like wood working.

Your wonderful magazine speaks to the soul of boating. Thank you for all your good work.

Dave Seastrom Unionville, IN

Let's Hear It for Algae!

Dave Carnell's letter concerning ethanol fuel in the January 1 issue is only partially correct. Ethanol contains far less energy per unit volume than does gasoline and requires much factory made fertilizer to grow the corn. And the artificial fertilizer uses petroleum during its manufacture. Where is the saving?

If every square foot of the U.S. were given over to soybean and other biofuel plants, which were then converted to biodiesel, we could not produce sufficient fuel to supply our present transportation needs. Soy can produce only about 40 gallons of biodiesel per acre per year.

However, we don't need to continue importing/burning petrofuel. There is a plant out there that could supply all the diesel fuel requirements this country and the world requires. It can supply upwards of 10,000 to 15,000 gallons of biodiesel per acre per year... **ALGAE!**

Algae quickly grows everywhere using sunshine (photosynthesis), CO₂, and many types of waste material (sewage, manure, etc.). The technology is available only requiring scale up and, yes, lots of investment. Make your next car (and boat) a diesel.

Bob Abramson, PE, Stonington, CT

Apologies from Chuck

My apologies to readers who were offended ("You write..." January 15) by my informing them of the impending PFD legislation being worked up by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat. My remarks commented on the value of PFDs. Readers are incorrect in attributing such legislation to me.

Chuck Sutherland, Green Lane, PA

This Magazine..

Let's Hear it for Pedal Power

While I would debate some of Dave Carnell's statements in the January 1 "Readers write..." I don't think *MAIB* is the right forum to get into the minutiae. Maybe my article got into more of it than it should have. In any case, Dave is, of course, right that ethanol can in no way satisfy our current voracious appetite for fuel. But petroleum can't do it indefinitely either and I'd like to save some of that oil to make cool things like epoxy and Dacron. My efforts to clean up old outboards can only be considered a temporary measure at best. And mostly just to keep gasoline out of the fish I'm hoping to catch.

But this finite energy situation does present an opportunity for me to take my hat off to *MAIB*. To my knowledge, no extant publication has done more to promote discussion on pedal-powered boats. As the most efficient practical use of human muscle power, this is something we should work on more. *MAIB* offers a wealth of information in the back issues from Bolger, Thiel, and others. There is some overlap with *Human*

Power, the technical journal of the International Human Powered Vehicle Association. But as far as I can tell they are not publishing anymore. So hats off to *MAIB* for not letting this topic fade. In the future I hope to present more on this topic.


Rob Rohde-Szudy, Fitchburg, WI

Stylish Renewal Envelope

We often find nice encouraging notes on renewal order forms but John Lawless went beyond this with this decorated envelope. I inquired as to how he imprinted the envelope and he replied, "with rubber stamps."

Bob Hicks, Editor






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The tiller of the wildly rolling boat tugged heavily, trying to break free. The rudder was almost useless in the light air as the huge swells rolled in from the west, the direction of our heading. We had just put the mainsail back up and were trying to keep it from tearing itself to pieces. Even though there was little wind, the sea was still turbulent and paddling had proven useless. We would take any drive we could get from the sails.

I told Rolf I had seen some lights and I pointed over the pitching port bow. We both peered into the inky midnight air, waiting to ride up on a swell. Then we both saw it.

The fast moving passenger liner was a great platform of brilliant lights, less than a mile away and closing rapidly. Others had gone by but this was the first to bear down directly on our wayward boat. We had to try to get the cantankerous flashlight working again and shine it on the slatting sail.

A week earlier we'd launched the boat from the trailer at Marina di Campo, a popular tourist beach facing a large, boulder strewn bay on the Italian Island of Elba. That started what was planned as a Tuscan Archipelago cruise in a small open sailboat, intended to raise the literary ghosts of Alexandre Dumas and follow in their wake. It wouldn't be comfortable in this 15' boat but it offered the high adventure we'd experienced before in small boat cruising.

We'd been planning this cruise (dreaming about it) for some time, but certainly not in the traditional way as our charts were not nautical but mostly road maps and an old National Geographic Atlas and, for reference, a copy of *The Count of Monte Cristo*. High summer was in full swing and all of Europe was vacationing. We both worked with a NATO consortium in Brescia and lived in Desenzano del Garda, a storybook town on a fabled northern Italian lake where we sailed year-round. It was the starting point of our trip. We had trailered the boat to Piombino, a no nonsense industrial port and then took the car ferry to Elba.

I had remembered from reading the Monte Cristo book that the main character

In the Wake of Alexandre Dumas (A Small Voyage)

By J.J. Bohnaker

was something of a sailor and it struck me that a small voyage to the island of Monte Cristo (Montecristo) might just enliven the events described in the novel. It was also a very good excuse for camp cruising the Tyrrhenian sea while vacationing with the wives and kids on Elba.

The novel, written by Alexandre Dumas, takes place during the politically charged Napoleonic era. For those readers who may wish to have their memories recharged, here is a very brief (perhaps inaccurate, there are many translations) synopsis:



The Simoun-Class sloop ready to leave Lake Garda.

The main character Edmond Dantes, a successful citizen of Marseilles and about to be married, is tricked by his "friend," a political foe, and is charged with and convicted of treason. He is sent to the infamous Chateau D'If, a vile prison set on an offshore rocky island. While there a fellow prisoner, Count de Spada, reveals a stupendous dying secret, he has hidden all his considerable wealth on the island of Montecristo.

After several miserable years Dantes manages a spectacular water escape and finds the treasure. He takes on a new identity

as the mysterious "Count" of Monte Cristo and returns to Marseilles/Paris for revenge but, alas, finds that his fiance has taken up with his enemy! It's a high adventure novel, filled with lots of salty stuff much to a sailor's delight.

The first sea leg planned from Elba was southeast to the isle of Giglio, 35 miles, then west to Montecristo, some 22 miles, which had a whole chapter devoted to its description in the book and, of course, was the location of the treasure which we hoped, ahem, to find again. Then the plan was to head northwest 20 miles to the prison island of Pianosa, a reminder of the awful Chateau D'If.

Giglio, a popular tourist island with good harbors and beaches, was probably visited by Dumas during his many cruises of the area, he, too, was a sailor of sorts and had taken many small boat cruises throughout the archipelago, settings for his novels. Giglio was also the place where the Emperor Barbarossa captured and enslaved 700 of the population.

The last leg of the cruise would be back to Elba, about 20 miles. With fair winds and the gods willing we estimated three days and so planned on five. Landfalls were not always certain (Pianosa, for example) and so the cruise had to be self-sufficient beach cruising. Alas! When we explained this

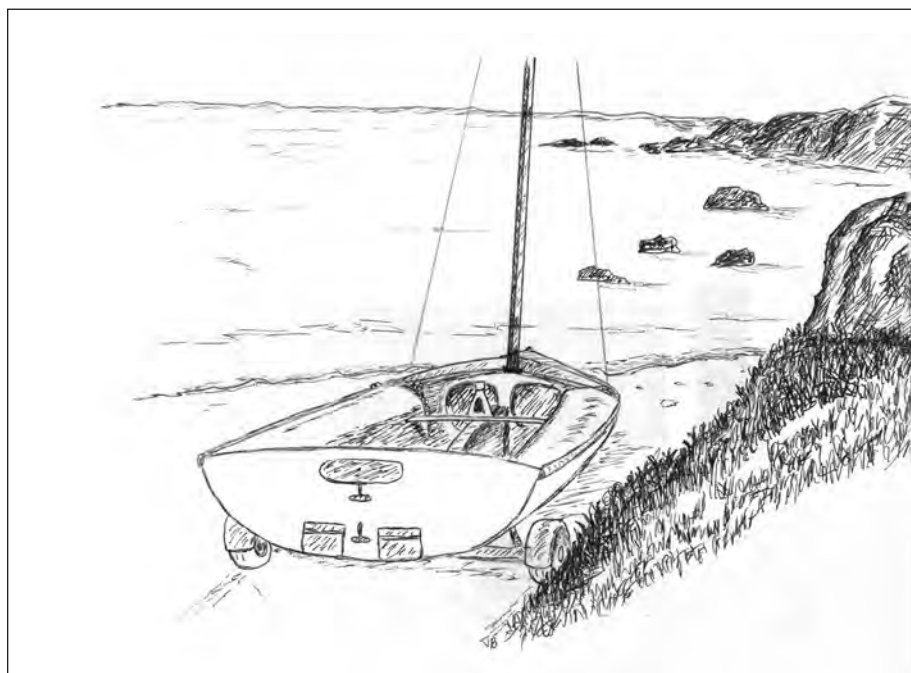


Elba fisherman's Med-style boat.

grand plan to the wives they said that we must be crazy! What would they do? Montecristo would be enough by itself and we had one or maybe two days at best!

The boat, a wooden 15' French Simoun-class racing sloop, a design something between a 420 and a 470, had rolled tanks and hiking straps tacked to the sole. It had the initial stability of a class C sailing canoe but, once underway, could stand up to a real blow. It was not ideal for cruising but we had confidence in the boat. Besides, we had no other.

Elba had served to hold Napoleon for a short exile and visiting Elba during Napoleon's exile had been the source of Edmond Dantes' (*The Count of Monte Cristo*) woes. We visited Napoleon's elegant villa and sensed the presence of Dantes. Also, we learned that Victor Hugo had spent his childhood here. The dry, warm climate, wonderfully scented air, and crystal clear bays came as pleasant surprises. Driving the north and west coasts showed rugged moun-



tains plunging abruptly into the sea. Inland, succulents were interwoven with, palms, cedars, and eucalyptus. A plain of olive groves and vineyards sloped from the center of the island southward into the sea, forming the beaches of the delightful Marina di Campo, our base for this vacation.

At that time there were only a few beaches around the island where small boats could launch directly into the waiting surf. We watched the local fisherman haul their heavy Med style double enders up on the beach every morning using small logs and then roll them back in at dusk. When we launched, they insisted on giving us a hand, laughing at the lightness of our boat. They said it was not safe to go to sea in such a boat. It weighed less than their oars.

We made several day trips around the island, getting used to the wind and waves and beaching the boat in the sometimes tricky surf, although there were a few times of flat calm. Finally we stocked up, our cruising supplies coming mostly from the local beach store consisting of Pesci Fritti (something like delicious french-fried sardines), two bottles of local white Moscato and red Aleatico wine, lots of fresh island bread, boiled eggs, local cheese, and some canned goods. On board we carried a 1hp communist outboard with a mind of its own, extra gas, and we stuffed most of the gear and the few days' worth of supplies and water under the front deck which had a thin bulkhead with twin hatches. The boat had little floor space and none of that was flat and almost never dry.

We launched after dawn in a light breeze, watching the fishermen roll their double enders in, fish boxes filled with sardines and small tuna. The breeze stayed light in the bay where we launched and we wallowed in heaving seas while laying a course for Giglio (we were going to do what the wives wanted, but we thought we'd see if we couldn't fit Giglio and Pianosa in anyway) which was almost 140 degrees, although we couldn't see the island from that point.

When we cleared the mouth of the bay the light air disappeared as a smart southerly hit us dead on the nose. The boat jumped up on a plane and we flew off on a starboard tack, the little boat very manageable as it slid over the rolling seas. It was just a joy to be sailing so fast, sitting almost on the waves themselves with the occasional wild one climbing aboard.

Sailing like this until the sun was overhead, we changed the helm every hour. Several tacks were made and while we were close hauled on a port tack a large fin suddenly appeared alongside the lee rail which was almost awash. It looked like a close relative of the great white and I almost choked on my french-fried fish. I was sitting on the bottom, off watch, and the fin was only a few feet from me at eye level. "What is that?" I remember shouting. Before Rolf could answer, more fins appeared and instantly dolphins were leaping everywhere. They were LARGE, seeming bigger than the boat itself, and I thought they were going to leap into the cockpit. Then, as if at some signal, they all disappeared.

A few moments later a loud bang sounded and the boat lurched violently to port and it happened again and again. "They're hitting the centerboard!" I yelled. I jumped to the pennant and hauled up on the centerboard just as it was slammed again and the boat lurched and headed up.

"Maybe they're trying to capsize us," I recall Rolf yelling. "I never heard of this ..."

Once the board was up the banging stopped and the dolphins started leaping again. We bore off and gained some speed and they followed. They splashed large dollops of water into the boat, leaping off both sides and the bow. The faster we went, the more frantic the leaping became and the more water we took on.

We changed tactics and headed up, stalling the boat. The dolphins circled us like wolves at a kill. Then one would charge directly at the boat at high speed, veering off at the last instant. They did this until they tired of the game and apparently decided we were not some great predatory fish. All at once they submerged and were gone, appearing again about 100 yards off the bow and moving away toward Sicily. It was puzzling behavior, something neither of us had experienced before. It may have been the shape of the hull that excited the dolphins.

We dropped the centerboard, brought the boat around on a tack, and climbed to the windward rail as the afternoon wind had really piped up. We'd lost ground and the day was drifting away so we gave up on Giglio and set course for Montecristo. The strong westerly continued after we tacked towards Montecristo and the seas kicked up considerably. We stayed on the starboard tack for a while and it was rough and wet sailing close hauled in those seas but at least the dolphins didn't show up again. I thought Dumas and his companion, Prince Napoleon (son of THE Napoleon) who, in a raging storm, had crossed this sea in an open rowboat, also on their way to Montecristo.

All souls who venture to make voyages in small boats understand the sense of utter helplessness one gets when sailing on the face of an angry sea. Only experience can keep a brave voyage from turning into terror and panic. I was sure that same terror had gripped the hearts of the two traveling Bonapartists (Dumas and his companion) who had so serenely left solid ground and the calm waters of a limpid bay in their small rowboat only a few hours before running into a storm. The sea I saw before us now was a snarling, foaming beast with the power to smash us to bits and this wasn't even really much of a blow.

But we held on and eventually the wind rotated as we'd predicted, dropping to a good breeze, and fair sailing held from then on for several hours. We arrived about 4:00 or 5:00 in the afternoon. Since leaving the bay we'd been sailing for close to ten hours and by compass position readings made when we tacked, we estimated an average speed of six knots. We needed a rest.

Unlike Elba, Montecristo loomed up menacingly from the foaming sea, plainly a granite mountain top thrusting above the waves, forcing us to keep a good offing as we sailed around its somewhat grim coastline. Surf was breaking in creamy billows on the rocky skirts of the mountain and we sailed around until we found a small protected cove on the north shore. Instead of smashing, bullying waves, on this side a heaving, swelling, confused sea with a tremendous undertow held our attention. The boat nearly capsized before we had it up on a small patch of sand on the mostly rocky shore. We'd practiced this maneuver before and that had helped. Dumas and his friend didn't land on the island and I could well understand why. The

shore is rough and beaches are strewn with boulders with but a few clear places for landing. On a stormy day it would be a dangerous proposition in a heavy rowboat.

We explored the rocky face of the island, looking for clues to the fabled treasure cave. I re-read the instructions for locating the treasure from the will of the Count de Spada, "...and which he will find (the treasure) on raising the twentieth rock from the small creek to the east in a right line. Two openings have been made in these caves..."

We found a shallow cave but, alas, nothing could be found in the fading daylight to match the instructions. Unfortunately we did find a sign that warned us it was forbidden to be on the island. What luck.

We ate supper, finished off a bottle of the fruity Elba wine, and rested on the cooling sand while watching the blue and gold hues of the glorious sunset streaming over the wild Tyrrhenian sea. In spite of the unfriendly sign we were prepared to stay the night as Edmond Dantes had done in the novel, but as we were cleaning up a cold chill ran down my spine and I could feel the hairs stand up on my neck. I perceived above us, in the gathering gloom, a dark figure with what appeared to be a gun strapped to his shoulder. As I watched, the figure remained as steady as a rock, but when I looked away for a moment the figure disappeared behind the mountain. We didn't want to sail at night but after a brief discussion the boat was hastily prepared for departure. We hadn't realized that at that time the island was privately owned.

We launched into the confused sea with some difficulty but again practice paid off. The wind had dropped considerably but the sea was still running high and our circumnavigation convinced us that there was no place to anchor in such conditions. We laid course for Pianosa, hoping to find an anchorage for the night.

The seas, which had been on our bow before, were now quartering on the stern and we had to be alert for broaching. I helmed while Rolf rested and after an hour I found the exercise of balancing on wave tops and then sliding down their backs very tiring. On top of the waves there was just enough wind to fill the sails, but in the troughs the sails slacked and control was difficult. When Rolf took the tiller I dozed for a while.

When Rolf woke me it was very dark and I could sense a change in the motion of the boat. The wind had disappeared altogether with the daylight but the seas continued to roll on. The boat rolled and shook like a rampaging steer and the boom slammed menacingly from port to starboard.

"Better get the flashlight out," I said, rummaging through the gear under the front deck. When I switched it on it didn't work. I fiddled with it and because I had my head down for some time I became seasick. I put the light down and sat up, my head up and my eyes open. The wild motion of the boat prevented the nausea from passing quickly. It was time to drop the sails and hang on the tiny outboard.

The cantankerous air-cooled machine, made, if I recall correctly, in the state of East Germany, started with the usual difficulty, sputtered in defiance, and then wound up, screaming at 6,000 rpm quite independent of the throttle setting. This was a motor that wanted space, that needed to go places. The boat now moved forward slowly with much less rolling. In the darkness the tiny propeller,

while it stayed in the water, blazed a trail of brilliant phosphorescent fire, an amazing phenomenon to experience. It looked as if we were rocketing through the sea.

Many ships had passed during the day, mostly along the horizon, and now that it was dark moving lights could be seen everywhere. A certain group of lights seemed to be moving in an erratic pattern towards us with a back and forth, stop and go motion. The lights would appear and disappear as we rose and fell on the waves. The distance between us and the lights diminished rapidly and shortly we could make out what appeared to be a fleet of fishing trawlers. Each boat appeared to be towing lines that stretched hundreds of feet behind the stern and all the sea was lit up by the powerful lamps they carried. They continued on their steady

progress towards us and our sail was quickly re-hoisted so they could see us.

As we rose on each wave the trawlers became more menacing and scary and soon the throb of big diesel engines could be felt as well as heard. Finally they engulfed us, moving around like giant water bugs, trailing cables that must have been pulling nets. At one point the powerful light from one of the trawlers mounted high on a work boom lit up our sail but the crew seemed to notice nothing. Our boom and sail thumped and jerked and the sail occasionally fired off a loud snap. But the noise from the sea and the big diesels covered these meager sounds and soon they'd passed around us, seemingly without seeing us at all. After 15 minutes they were lost again in the rolling waves. They could have plowed us under without

ever having known that something happened. I'm sure I remember that we both wiped nervous sweat from our face.

A short while after the trawlers had passed the motor sputtered and died, out of gas. It was then we discovered that someone had, perhaps, "borrowed" our extra gas, the can was almost empty. Our cruising check list had been incomplete.

It was well after dark and we had covered an estimated 10 miles. We had at least another 10 miles to go to reach the Pianosa light with no wind, no motor, and a restless sea. To stop the sail from tearing itself to bits, we lowered it and tried paddling. This effort soon proved to be frustrating and useless. We only used the paddle and rudder to keep us from yawing and broaching and found the effort wearying. One of us fought the seas while the other grabbed snatches of sleep.

It was around 1:00 in the morning when the cruise ship mentioned earlier bore directly down on us. In the vastness of the dark, heaving ocean the vessel appeared as a ghost ship and I wondered if the ghost of Dumas was not aboard to chide us about our hasty departure from Montecristo. We had raised the sail just before the ship, but the flashlight was done for.

The ghost ship continued on its dangerous course until we could see the lights reflecting off the water and hear and feel the thunder of the big engines. We watched, feeling very helpless, as the big wall of lights came closer and closer and finally sat dumfounded as we watched it slide by. I saw people moving around inside the ship through the passing portholes. We held on with white knuckles, expecting our tossing boat to be sucked into the ship or capsized by the boiling wake.

When none of this happened we realized that the ship must have passed at a greater distance than we'd thought. Later we guessed it to be about a hundred yards. The darkness and the size of the vessel compared to ours had played with our imaginations, although it still had been uncomfortably close. Dumas had played a good trick on us.

The Pianosa Island light came into view just before dawn. A light breeze finally sprang up and at dawn we sailed along the coast. Although the island was flat it rose precipitously from the sea and presented what appeared to be a wall about 10-20' high. The place seemed forbidding, although we could see no sign of prisoners, and we felt like uninvited guests. I couldn't help wonder if there wasn't a Dante locked in that terrible prison, similar to the Chateau D'If, looking desperately through a barred window at our little boat as a means of escape. We sailed around, looking for an anchorage.

The uncomfortable feeling we had about Pianosa persisted and after we drifted around for a while, resting, we gave up and turned our bow back towards Elba. The wind freshened and just after 1:00 we landed back at Marina di Campo in a light surf with our literary ghosts and memories that would serve a lifetime. The wives seemed happy, although Rolf's wife said she was just on the point of calling in the Italian Navy.

Although we had not the time we had hoped for and had not seen all we had intended to, we were happy with our cruise, the boat, and the many encounters we'd had with the ghost of Dumas and his literary friends. The dolphins, trawlers, and cruise ship had made all the more memorable.



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At the St. Léonard, New Brunswick, border station, across the St. John River from Van Buren, Maine, the customs agent was friendly but efficient. She drilled me with the standard questions, "Any alcohol, tobacco, or firearms in the car?" "Where are you going and how long will you be in Canada?"

"A week to canoe the Restigouche."

The questions stopped. She smiled and repeated, "Restigouche." As though the name were a magic password, she waved me through without further delay.

It was Saturday, June 17, 2006. After driving northward from the border crossing to the village of Kedgwick River, I checked into the Chalets Restigouche hunting and fishing camp (open for snowmobiling in the winter) and inquired about lunch in the camp's restaurant. The chef greeted me, having anticipated my arrival thanks to my guide's reservations for an overnight cabin. "If you would like," she said, "I'll prepare you a special salmon lunch," one that wasn't even on the menu.

Savoring my baked salmon encrusted with bacon, I watched the Restigouche flowing by. Across the river was a high sandbank with fishing canoes beached or tied up. Reflecting on these two chance incidents, even before I had paddled a single stroke, I knew this was destined to be a great trip.

After lunch I drove across the bridge to the Arpin Canoë Restigouche headquarters. First came two barking dogs, then a black-bearded, middle-aged man who greeted me. It was André Arpin, owner of this sprawling base camp. "Raphael has just left for the town of Kedgwick to purchase the food for the trip. You are the only person he is taking. He wanted to go."



Canoes ahoy! The fleet at the Arpin base camp would outfit a small navy.

André was an intriguing fellow as I found out when he told me a bit of his story. "During the 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic, my grandfather was living in Montreal," André said. "He saw so many people dying that he left there for New Brunswick with his wife and 12 children, two more were born here. As a young man I lived and worked as a carpenter in Dawson City, Yukon Territory. In my spare time I canoed the Bonnet Plume and Peel Rivers."

Upon his return to New Brunswick 13 years ago, he started his outfitter business with six canoes and a pickup truck on top of a hill near Kedgwick. Subsequently relocating to a site on the river, entrepreneur André now owns more than a hundred canoes, a fleet of buses and vans (living quarters for his employees), his own home, storage barns, a carpentry shop, a large garden, and cows and goats. And the road even bears his name, "Chemin [street] Arpin." From a tall pole the flag of New Brunswick, featuring a wooden ship, fluttered over the scene. I knew I had come to the right place.

"Rich Man's River" Canoeing New Brunswick's Restigouche

By Richard E. Winslow III
For Ed & Marianna, Toby & Jean,
Tom & Gail



Depicting a wooden ship in its colors, the flag of the Province of New Brunswick flies over a modern canoe.



Welcoming Arpin billboard sign greets canoeists.



Anyone home? Downtown view of the Arpin canoe empire.

André waved me over to his business office run by his daughter, Marie-Christine, a university student home for her summer vacation. After we completed some remaining paperwork I met Raphael Soucy, my guide for the upcoming six-day, five-night expedition. Raphael was about 30 years old, black-bearded, physically fit, and a lover of rivers. "I've been guiding on this river for ten

years," he said. "I've tried various occupations and I am currently a student at the University of Newfoundland/Corner Brook. Maybe I'll become a teacher someday but I always go back to rivers and guiding. I enjoy that more than anything else."

I myself have always viewed guiding as a noble calling, worthy of respect in every way. "What you think of yourself," I said to him, quoting an unknown source, "is more important than what others think of you."

As we repacked my gear and loaded the van for the morning drive to the put-in on the upper Kedgwick River, Raphael reviewed the logistics for the trip. "We'll paddle the Kedgwick for two and a half days. In the upper stretches it's quite bony and shallow in places. It is a spring river with a fast runoff. On the third day we'll arrive back here at base camp and pick up the confluence with the Restigouche for the three-day paddle to the salt water of the Bay of Chaleur."

Raphael mentioned casually that he was descended from many generations of French-Canadians with a dash of Native American blood. Most Canadian guides almost invariably mention that they are descendants of the fabled voyageurs. Since the early 1600s, beginning with Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain, the voyageurs have explored, fished, trapped, hunted, and paddled the rivers, lakes, and woods on the vast North American continent, following the Native Americans who had been doing the same for 10,000 years before that. Endowed with such an intimate, inherited familiarity with the interplay of land, water, and wildlife, the best modern guides possess natural instincts for doing the right thing. Raphael was one of them.

Why paddle the Restigouche? The answers are easy. For a start, the Restigouche is one of the world's great salmon rivers, generally considered as prestigious as the Miramichi River, its rival to the east. I also knew that in 1998 the Restigouche had been designated a Canadian Heritage River for its beauty and history. I was also intrigued by an 1888 essay, "The Restigouche from a Horse-Yacht," written by Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933) (see *MAIB* July 1, 2006. Ed.). An American writer, minister, diplomat, and friend of presidents, Van Dyke fully expected to be remembered by posterity for his published sermons and philosophical writings.



Restigouche River bridge highway sign beckons salmon fishermen from around the world.

Like many others, he came here for the salmon fishing and he viewed his fishing sketches as strictly for amusement, dashed off to entertain his outdoorsy friends. Ironically, however, Van Dyke's sermons today are long forgotten, his canoeing and fishing essays are still avidly devoured by modern readers.

Discussing the spell cast by outdoor adventure stories, an Alaskan once told me, "The writings of Jack London, Rex Beach, and Bob Service brought more men to the North than the gold itself." Likewise, Van Dyke's writing lured me to the Restigouche.

Last but not least, I craved a new river to add to my "collection." Some people collect stamps, coins, paintings, baseballs, and all kinds of gewgaws. I collect rivers. In previous years I had paddled New Brunswick's Nepisiguit River and Québec's Bonaventure and Cascapédia Rivers. In recent years I had made a little rule for myself, leave the old behind and seek the new. The Restigouche would be my next river.

Day One

Sunday, June 18: On a blazing hot day Roland, our shuttle driver, transported us on a washboardy, dusty dirt road toward our put-in. During the hour long ride we saw slashed and clearcut areas along one side of the road, but the river side was protected and preserved by a "beauty strip" of standing trees. A mature rabbit bounded across the road, accelerating his leaps to avoid being hit. In a flash he disappeared into the woods. "There goes supper," I said.

Eventually we arrived at an almost-deserted government ranger station on Little Kedgwick Canadian Lake, source/headwaters of the Kedgwick. Raphael registered our proposed trip with a ranger whose little camp was actually in the province of Québec, just over the border. In this wild country why bother to post boundary signs? It all looks the same.



Register and don't get lost! Ranger station at the headwaters lake of the Kedgwick River.

When Roland left us, Raphael and I put in at cabin #16 down river right into fast water that was sweeping down at two to five miles per hour. Now the whole Kedgwick River valley opened before us, steep forested slopes, rough gravel cliffs, junglelike vegetation, and driftwood piles. A youthful stream was cutting its channel deeper, rearranging the gravel and rocks during every spring breakup. Along the way we spotted moose, otters, bald eagles, and ducks.



Nature at work. After battering and uprooting trees, the spring ice breakup creates driftwood piles at virtually every bend.

Of special interest were the mergansers, diving, fish-eating ducks. Frequently we would approach a mother merganser with a brood of five or six chicks in tow. Spotting us, the agitated mother inevitably made a racket, flapping her wings violently and flying off to distract our attention from her chicks. "If the original mother had died or was otherwise unavailable," Raphael said, "another mother would adopt the orphans. Sometimes 20 or 30 might be swimming behind a mature duck."

Time and again we jumped out of the canoe in the bony stretches to lighten the load. Once back in our seats we sighted Class II rapids ahead, plus logs, sweepers, leaning trees, everything but another canoe. For the entire trip, we would encounter no other paddlers.



Exercise station number 3. Raphael lifts and slides the canoe over a tree trunk spanning the river.

In late afternoon we approached Lady Step Rapids, the only Class III section on the trip. With so many ledges and boulders, fallen trees reduced to barkless trunks, and logs jammed against rock piles, we deemed it prudent to land. After a quick scout Raphael decided to line while I hiked an overgrown portage path, the forest so thick I could only hear and occasionally glimpse the roaring whitewater below.



Lady Step Rapids cascades below a rough portage trail.



The three basic tenets of canoeing are safety, safety, and again safety. Raphael wisely chooses to line Lady Step Rapids.

By late afternoon we arrived at the Depot Rapids campsite, a government-run facility with a ranger/warden, his cabin, a pickup truck, and a generator that putt-putted all night. On our way toward an observation tower to look down on the salmon pool, Raphael spoke in French with the ranger, who reported, "The temperature is 30 degrees Celsius [86 degrees Fahrenheit]."



Patience is in order; it takes time for the salmon swimming upstream to reach here. View from the wooden tower overlooking Depot Rapids Pool.

Raphael explained to me that the ranger/wardens along the river are either government officials or private lodge employees. Both types are charged with being on the lookout for poachers. Although they carry no firearms, they constitute the law here and can present evidence before the Department of National Resources and Energy courts. Their testimony in such matters legally holds up. The salmon pool here is a government-controlled operation, through a provincial fishing-lottery system the winners can fish for 48 hours and then leave. I didn't grasp all the fine points of this whole legal arrangement but I heartily concurred with its objective, without regulations and restrictions the salmon rivers would have been fished out a century ago.

Feeling close to melting in the heat, I headed down to the water for a swim. I had no fear of biting insects because I had learned a valuable lesson from the chief guide on an Arctic Barrens trip some years ago. The trick is to walk to the water fully clothed, strip as quickly as possible, and then immerse oneself immediately. Upon coming ashore, one's pores are puckered shut from



Chef Raphael prepares a five-star supper at Depot Rapids campsite.

the cold water and no insect's bite can penetrate the pinched, goose-pimpled skin. By the time the pores gradually open a few minutes later one is fully clothed, foiling the hungry insects. The invigorating salmon pool water was, in fact, salmon free as they had yet to swim this far upstream so early in the season.



Basking in the spell of the Kedgwick, the author enjoys a final cup of tea before turning in for the night.

As we finished supper at a riverside table, I faced westward to watch the glorious Canadian sunset (even humming the song) with layers of salmon-colored streaks. The constant music of gurgling, rushing water soothed our minds. From the low ridgeline and tall trees, shadows descended deeper and deeper into the valley. Cool evening breezes wafted off the river. Raphael and I were content in this peaceful place.



Preparing for the upcoming day's paddle, Raphael loads the canoe at Depot Rapids landing.

Day Two

Monday, June 19: For the next five days, we paddled, camped, ate, slept, and swam, enduring the heat and occasional thunderstorms. The canoeing life quickly merged into the fishing life. Without my asking, Raphael would comment at length on every aspect of the great Kedgwick/Restigouche river system. "For thousands of years the Native Americans in the spring and summer followed the salmon upstream and then downstream for their food supply. During the winter, they returned to the same riverbanks for hunting.

A century ago, wealthy sportsmen flocked here to catch salmon. They still come

and pay up to \$1,000 a day at lodges that have their own leased pools. As a result, the Restigouche was nicknamed 'the rich man's river.' And most of the fish stories told here are true, the salmon are big, weighing 30 to 40 pounds."

Rapid by rapid, pool by pool, we swung below fragile, crumbling, gravel cliffs. Over the years these cliffs had supplied numerous boulders that had broken loose, crashed into the water below, and created little pools. "The dark pools next to the cliffs are cool in the shade," said Raphael. "The fish hide behind the boulders to rest."

Soon we approached our first salmon fishermen, a client and his guide in a craft long associated with local rivers and lakes, a canoe with a wide transom on which a small outboard motor, or "kicker," was mounted. I had seen an almost identical boat, "The Grand Laker," in the Grand Lake Stream area of Maine where the locals insist they invented the design. Likewise, New York's Adirondack guides claim that they originated this specialized boat design.

Needless to say, the Restigouche community argues against these claimants, alleging that the others stole the design from them. In any case, whoever built the first prototype of this small craft, his legacy continues to this day, this boat has proved to be the perfect workhorse from which to catch fish.

According to time-honored river protocol, Raphael and I always paddled quietly on the far opposite side from where the fisherman was casting in order to avoid a tangled line. "The fishermen have an unsubstantiated complaint," Raphael said to me. "They contend that paddle strokes ruin any chance for catch."

"This sounds like the same myth I've heard about fishing in Yellowstone National Park," I responded. "The fishermen allege that the hot geyser-water runoff draining into the park's lakes and rivers wrecks the fishing. Rangers and scientists there insist such talk is totally absurd."

At any rate, to avoid any hint of interference, we hugged the far bank. Guide and client waved in a dejected manner, indicating to us with body language that they had gained nothing for their efforts.

We passed Fraser Lodge, owned by eastern Canada's Fraser Timber, complete with a 17-mile-long fishing lease. Such lodges, owned by companies, clubs, and families, tend to look fairly uniform, a main building, usually two stories high, with a dining room overlooking the river. Noted American architect Stanford White designed a number of these lodges with distinctive trademark pyramidal roofs in the 1890s and early 1900s, outbuildings and cabins flanked the main lodge.

Surrounded by forest, the grounds were immaculate, the grass freshly mowed. Fishing craft clustered around the docks and wharves. Canadian flags, often accompanied by New Brunswick flags or American ones, waved from a number of flagpoles. During the entire trip we never saw, let alone conversed with, any lodge owner, guest, onshore guide, maintenance personnel, or staff. These people had paid for privacy, which we respected.

"There's a large salmon," Raphael exclaimed. "No! Two or three of them!" I peered into the incredibly clear water (there are no factories or power plants upstream) but failed to spot them.

It was time for a stretch so we landed

and walked around a bend where we spied a beached fishing canoe. Two men were excitedly reeling in a fish but their hopes were soon dashed. The client fisherman in his Orvis vest glanced toward us as he landed the catch, a trout, not a salmon. "This fish is yours," he said. After accepting the gift, Raphael responded helpfully, "We've seen salmon upriver." "Send them down here," said the disappointed angler. Since fish spoil rapidly in hot weather, Raphael proposed that he and I have the trout for lunch, whereupon he banged its head against a rock.



A salmon fisherman proudly displays his freshly caught trout, which he donated to the author and his guide.



he eager client (bow) and his patient guide (stern) paddle in search of a more productive pool.



Raphael prepares the trout for lunch.

For our lunch break we landed on the river's shady side, facing a massive, 50' cut-bank on the opposite shore where the fast-flowing river was persistently attacking the base of the gravel slope. Logs and branches, strewn haphazardly on the almost vertical bank, looked ready to plummet into the water at any moment.

Raphael coated the trout with crumbs and fried it perfectly, graciously insisting that I take three-fourths of it. As I surveyed the

setting, straight out of a voyageur adventure tale, I rested my head on my life preserver, almost too relaxed. Seeing this, Raphael told me about one of his clients on a family fishing trip. "The harried man worked in an office, overwhelmed with time constraints, production goals, and deadlines. He came on the trip with the same get-everything-done-instantly compulsion. On the second day I took away his watch. Soon the man began to relax, could care less what hour it was, and had the best time of his life."

As we continued onward, the broiling sun made me drowsy in the bow seat, almost too relaxed, and half asleep. After a day of this enervating heat we were happy to nose the canoe in for a mud slope landing. Our home for the night was Eight Mile Brook Pool campsite, where we found ourselves sharing an overgrown grassy field with an army of insects that fought valiantly against our invasion.



Let's patent this idea. After a rainy night, Raphael shakes the water off the tents prior to packing

Day Three

Tuesday, June 20: In the late morning, when we landed at the Home Pool campsite for a stretch and a snack, I immediately noticed an immense fireplace with a 15' chimney, a stonemason's masterpiece. Raphael anticipated my question. "General Carter, now dead, built his lodge here. One day the place burned down, leaving just the fireplace. The story goes that the general was so angry that he wasn't catching any salmon in this pool that he torched the lodge out of sheer frustration. Today the pool continues to be barren. At any rate, the general then went downstream and built another lodge next to a much more productive pool."



Left standing after a blaze, General Arthur Carter's fireplace and chimney now serve the public at Home Pool campsite.

I thought to myself that the North has so many legends, myths, and tall stories, Robert Service's Sam McGee and the like, that even the experts have difficulty separating fact from fiction. This story, probably apocryphal, was easily one of the best. Historian that I am in the real world, I was determined to research this matter further after this trip. At any rate, the general certainly left posterity a most useful stone monument.

Within half an hour we approached an elaborate lodge on river right. "That's the camp General Carter built to replace the one that burned," Raphael said. The facility stood atop a green knoll at the strategically located confluence of the Kedgwick and Little Main Restigouche Rivers, forming the mighty Restigouche itself. The general had chosen a much better site at Junction Pool, which received both incoming cold water and nutrients for the salmon.



Overlooking the confluence of the Restigouche (left) and the Kedgwick (right) Rivers, General Carter's second lodge is strategically situated for prime fishing

Within a minute we landed on the beach near our base camp, Arpin Canoë Restigouche, to replenish our supply of fresh food and water. Besides, it was time for lunch hosted by the Arpin family in a screened porch overlooking the river. I could not resist asking André about the general. "His first name was Arthur and he was an American, not a Canadian, general," André said. "His stone home, another one of his properties, is just beyond our vegetable garden. The building is unused and needs repairs."

After lunch I inspected the fortress-like rock structure, another stonemason's masterpiece. The window openings were quite small. "He had his home built this way," Raphael assured me, "so that he could escape assassination."

I should mention here that upon my return to civilization I immediately headed for a library. It turned out that Major General Arthur H. Carter (1884-1965) was a highly honored veteran of World Wars I and II and had served President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the War Department. Carter was also a very successful accountant and civic leader in New York City. For me, the most important aspect of this legendary fisherman was that he loved the Restigouche.

Back at the riverbank after lunch, Raphael and Roland (our shuttle driver) were in the process of loading a different canoe. For the first half of the trip we had been paddling an "XL (Extra Large) Old Town Tripper" (#112 in the Arpin canoe inventory). The rugged 20-footer has a low draft that is best suited for bony sections and bumps. For the balance of the expedition we were switching to an "Esuit (a Canadian company) Prospecteur 17" (#107 of the Arpin canoes). The lighter 17-footer would

ride faster and more quickly in the deeper, less rambunctious water.

At the gravel beach I noticed two husky-looking men in bathing trunks who jumped into the river for a swim. Within moments one of them became caught in the fast water, a major hazard at this confluence of rivers, and started yelling. His buddy had been able to extricate himself. Raphael and Roland jumped into an empty canoe and raced to the swimmer, who was as helpless as a loose log in rapids.



Help from two good Samaritans. Raphael and Roland race upstream to rescue a beleaguered swimmer caught in the current

When Raphael and Roland closed in on the foolhardy victim, he instantly reached up to grasp the gunwales of their canoe. As the rescue canoe approached shore, the swimmer had the sense to tuck his legs against his chest to avoid banging them on submerged rocks. When they landed, Raphael and the survivor shook hands and exchanged a few pleasantries. The lucky man then walked up the bank to join his friends in a van.

After they drove off Raphael confided to me, "I smelled alcohol." The resident ranger, an older man with many years of service, walked down from his cabin from which he had observed the whole scene. "With that terrible current," he said, "sooner or later a swimmer will drown." By this point, the fellow probably was downing another beer in the van, his close call all but forgotten. This event, however, affected me more than anything else on the trip. Magnificent scenery, salmon sightings, and beautiful sunsets, all are totally superfluous when compared to the value of a human life.

We got underway but the afternoon degenerated into lightning, thunder, and a torrential downpour which temporarily drove us off the river. Gradually, though, sunshine and blue skies returned.

On one quiet stretch we approached a spacious lodge, the slanting sun illuminating the buildings and the grounds with a special glow. "That's the Irving family lodge," Raphael said. "They also have others. There is no road approach here, the lodge is only accessible by boat from the opposite side of the river. Many private lodges even have their own helicopter pads. Irving family members regularly invite lobbyists, government officials, and other special guests to their lodges, making available plenty of gourmet food, fine wines, and cigars.



Complete with a communications tower, the Irving lodge serves as a restful retreat from the outside world.

In recent years, Brian Mulroney, the former Canadian prime minister, former president George H.W. Bush, and General Norman Schwarzkopf have experienced the Irving hospitality. Seeing all the security guards and vehicles, the people of Kedgwick village have been highly amused by all the fuss and bother."

Some background on the Irvings is in order here, providing useful insight into this river and the province. I knew very little about them beforehand. However, in my native New England and on my travels in eastern Canada, I had often stopped at Irving gas stations/convenience stores/restaurants which are located throughout the region, especially at highway junctions. After my Restigouche trip I was curious to learn more. According to a 1992 *New York Times* obituary and other sources, Kenneth Colin Irving (1899-1992), the family patriarch, was known as "Mr. New Brunswick." At the time of his death the family fortune was estimated at \$5 billion, generated from a far-flung conglomerate.

"K.C. Irving, Ltd. now owns about 300 private companies, mostly in New Brunswick and Québec provinces, with interests in oil, timber, mining, shipbuilding, construction, real estate, the information media, and transportation. It employs a twelfth of New Brunswick's work force and owns about a tenth of the province's land." Certainly these figures have increased in the last 14 years. My reaction was that if the Irvings, through their lodge and land holdings along the river, would continue to foster the preservation of the Restigouche, certainly the money was available for doing it.

For the rest of the day, I had one recurring thought. Just think. These exclusive fishing lodge families and their guests might see only two or three salmon pools on the whole river while they are here. Finally I expressed my thought to Raphael, adding, "Here we are, able to experience the whole expanse of this river, with all its scenery, for six days." I hoped my little confession didn't seem too far-fetched to him.



Why leave paradise? The view ahead captures the exhilaration of being on the majestic Restigouche as it flows down to the sea.

"I wouldn't trade places," he said.

Eventually we encountered another evil rainstorm so we pulled off the river at the Hafford Brook campsite. For supper the master chef heated up a pot of cream of fiddlehead soup, a local specialty and an Arpin Canoe Restigouche tradition. This tasty

spring fern grows wild along the Atlantic coast's rivers and creeks. On a previous canoe trip in mid-June on Québec's Bonaventure River, the chef/guide had served freshly picked fiddleheads as a vegetable. By that time of year, however, the mature stalks and leaves were tough and stringy. To me, the dish tasted vaguely like stewed spinach so I left most of it on my tin plate.

Raphael assured me now that such a situation would not be repeated. "We pick the fiddleheads in early spring when they are young, coiled, and tender. Then, in the kitchen, the Arpins add chives, parsley, potatoes, and apple cider vinegar when making the soup."

Raphael ladled out the steaming hot soup and I tasted my first spoonful. "Magnifique!" I exclaimed. It had a taste and consistency rather like a robust split-pea soup. "For thousands of years," Raphael said, "the Native Americans, and later European explorers and settlers, relied on fiddleheads as a staple in their diet." Tonight we carried on their tradition, which provided sustenance for tomorrow's paddle.

Day Four

Wednesday, June 21: In the morning, just after first light, when I emerged from my tent, Raphael was already preparing breakfast. I waved, always wanting to take the first opportunity to alert my guide that I'm alive and kicking. A late sleep-in has no place on an expedition like this.

Over breakfast I told Raphael the reason for my greeting. In 1896, former Massachusetts governor William "Billy" Russell made a strong but unsuccessful showing as a presidential candidate at the Democratic convention. After this political defeat, Russell and some friends traveled to B.F. Dutton's camp on the Palos River, Gaspé Peninsula, Québec, for salmon fishing. All agreed that Billy badly needed a rest and a change of scenery.

On the first morning, July 16, 1896, Russell failed to emerge from his tent. When the other members of the party investigated, they found Russell dead, at the age of only 39. His heart apparently had given out but his enemies cruelly whispered that Russell had committed suicide after his failure to win the nomination.

Fortunately our day passed pleasantly with no medical emergencies for us. The highlight was our arrival at the confluence with the Patapédia, a major tributary to the Restigouche, entering on river left with a hard, swirling charge. The Patapédia forms the boundary between New Brunswick and Québec. The boundary in turn continues along the downstream Restigouche, with Québec on river left and New Brunswick on river right. And, for whatever reason, the spelling of the river in Québec is officially Ristigouche.

Aside from such geographical trivia (the salmon and the trout could care less), the mixing of the colder Patapédia's nutrient-rich waters with the warmer Restigouche gives birth to the Million Dollar Pool, perhaps the most famous and sought after salmon pool in the world. The (true) story goes that in the mid-19th century a local resident, one Phyneas Wyers, received \$100 and the permit and deed from the two provincial governors for fishing rights. A century later the deed sold for \$75,000. Today that figure would be astronomically elevated. Whatever the current economics may have had to do with it, we skirted four boats in this pool, the

fishermen taking their chances this early in the season.

With Québec sharing the river, we were entering a new demarcation of leases, permits, and laws. Raphael spoke about this area. "The Restigouche Salmon Club, which owns most of the pools, is a Québec organization open to anyone able and willing to pay a million-dollar initiation fee. If someone is later found unacceptable, they can be blackballed and lose their membership. Most of the members are affluent Americans. At every pool we will see along the way, both the color of the boat and the guide's clothes feature the club's trademark forest green." The club has a long and storied history, having been active even in Henry Van Dyke's day.



An overturned canoe anchors one flap of the kitchen fly at Cross Point Campground.

Every pool had one or two boats carrying important fishermen but the salmon weren't biting. As we met more and more tributaries we enjoyed easy paddling with high enough water to ride over the rocks below. When we stopped at a shelter I found my slogan for the day. On the ceiling every space was cluttered with graffiti, written with charcoal sticks from the campfire, names, dates, hometowns, and who loved whom. I adopted one message for my own, "Are we on time? Who cares?"

A long, hairpin meander brought us to the campsite at Cross Point Island, owned by the Restigouche Salmon Club, whose well-displayed sign announced that it was open to the general public. From our camp Raphael pointed to the top of a high ridge where a white cross was visible in a clearing. "It's a memorial to the loggers who died here," he said. The days of the log drivers are long gone, of course, the timberjacks replaced by logging trucks.

Toward evening, Raphael faithfully erected a little cairn at water's edge so we would know whether the water level went up or down during the night. To gauge the accuracy, and in the event that the first might be rendered high and dry, he built a backup pile out in the shallow water. After a swim and supper we were off to sleep. The day was done.



The greatest concept since the invention of the wheel. Stone cairns measure the rise or drop of the river level.

Day Five

Thursday, June 22: With no rain during the night, the water had retracted to the second, farthest-out cairn. Raphael left this reference point intact for the next canoeing party, in time heavy rains and rushing water would dismantle it.



Raphael flexes his muscles to carry the canoe to the river's edge.



"A place for everything and everything in its place." Master loader Raphael adjusts the weight distribution for the canoe's trim.

We set off, now seeing more and more fishing canoes and cabins and fewer and fewer bald eagles, moose, and ducks. As the canoes passed us either coming or going, their motors trailed annoying fumes. We silently cursed the exhaust smell.

"The guides know the river so well that they rarely damage or scrape their propellers on submerged rocks and ledges," Raphael said. "The tough job is going upstream against rapids. Many guiding families have been here for generations. The sport of salmon fishing employs 300 guides each season and they are well paid."

During periods when we paddled in silence I often pondered my love for beautiful rivers, the Restigouche being one of the best. People often reflect on when and in what period they would prefer to live, in the past, now, or in the future. To each his own. As for me, I know I have been living at exactly the right time, while many North American (especially Canadian) rivers remain relatively unspoiled. A thousand years from now many of these rivers, as seems almost inevitable, will be dammed, polluted, or diverted.

Late in the afternoon we rounded a bend with an especially picturesque view of the river. "I guided Peter Gough on this river," Raphael said. "He is a well-known painter who lives near Peggy's Cove, an artists' colony just below Halifax, Nova Scotia. After the trip he painted this exact scene, and when I saw a reproduction I recognized it immediately."

Along with fishermen, hunters, and canoeists, the artist found his inspiration here. "My journeys to the rivers of New Brunswick have been an exploration into majesty," Gough wrote. "Travelling down great rivers as the Miramichi and the Restigouche is a revelation, it changes you. You come away with a sense of enlightenment and an inner experience of pure beauty."

As eloquent as Gough's feeling was for this river, Raphael and I now had to confront a pressing reality. Overhead the sun god and the rain god were battling mightily for supremacy, so we had no time to tarry. Ahead was our escape option, Walker Island campsite, a crude, undeveloped, pull-off-the-river type of site. We landed on the island, a gravel bar, no beach, thick brush, and a reasonably tall stand of trees in the center. To avoid exposure from the impending storm, we hoped to find a couple of tentsites under the trees so we endured a rough trek over downed limbs in search of level ground.



Reserved strictly for idiots and daredevils. Littered with splintered trunks and half-fallen limbs, the Walker Island tent sites are too hazardous for camping.

Tamped down dead grass areas indicated previous use. Overhead a canopy of numerous splintered dead tree trunks tilted, a few caught in their descent by living trees. Just walking beneath this tumbledown log-jam of trees scared me, as the whole house of log cards could crash at any moment. "This is a sword-of-Damocles situation," I muttered, recalling the mythical fellow who was seated at a banquet with a sword suspended over his head by a single strand of hair.

A few minutes later we pitched our tents in a very exposed place in humpy swale among some rocks. "I've camped in worse places," Raphael said, trying to strike a positive tone. Then the shower hit.

When the storm was over I picked my way through the soaking wet grass and saplings to join Raphael under a kitchen fly for supper. "Our campsite dilemma reminds me," I said, "of a similar situation in Jack London's short story 'To Build a Fire.' In the Klondike tale a prospector on the trail in the minus-75-degree bitter cold finally builds a fire under a tree to keep from freezing to death. With the fire roaring, he thought he was safe and would survive. Without warning, however, a huge patch of snow crashed down from branches high above and smothered the fire. The hapless prospector paid for his mistake and was doomed to death. We did the right thing avoiding the campsite in the trees."



Chaleur Bay or bust! Embracing Jack London's Call of the Wild lifestyle, the author prepares for the last day on the river.

Day Six

Friday, June 23: The last day on the river always is tinged with sadness. At breakfast Raphael told me the legend of the Restigouche. "Some say the river's name was derived from a Mi'kmaq word meaning 'Good river for canoeing.' Another version is that the name means 'The river with five fingers,' referring to the five main tributaries that flow into it. A Native American elder on a Québec reserve told me a story that I believe is true. Apparently the son of a Mi'kmaq chief was angry that the rival Mohawks were poaching fish in the river, since both tribes competed for the salmon. Against his father's wishes the headstrong son decided to lead an expedition against the Mohawks. In the riverside clash the Mohawks massacred the opposition, killing all the Mi'kmaq, including the chief's son. In deep mourning the anguished chief named the river Restigouche, meaning 'He who disobeys his father.'" Printed sources confirm Raphael's story.

In magnificent sunshine we were paddling on flatwater on the now wide Restigouche as the river mellowed en route to the sea. I have already getting nostalgic about it. "We'll have to extend the trip for another week," I said. "Let's take Roland hostage and have him drive us to the Miramichi."

"You wouldn't even have to do that," Raphael smiled. "He would voluntarily come with us."

I thought of some of my canoeing friends who should have been with us. They talked big, saying they were going to go someday, but they never got around to it. Audrey Sutherland, the well-known kayaker, has the right idea. "Go light, go solo, go now."

Raphael and I, two friends now, promised each other that next year we would canoe new rivers, perhaps a combined Matapédia-Upsalquitch expedition or possibly the Miramichi. Raphael teased me about the food we would have. "I'll prepare eggs Benedict with salmon, not with ham or Canadian bacon."

From occasional cabins, even farms, to the village of Matapédia, located at the river mouth of the same name, civilization began to take hold. I admired the white steeple of the village church, just as Henry Van Dyke had seen it more than a century ago. My communing with nature ended as we paddled under a railroad bridge and then under a four-lane steel highway bridge with vehicles rattling above.

I first sensed and then sniffed the salt air wafting upriver from the Bay of Chaleur. Gulls squawked overhead. Soon we spotted the skyline of the aptly named town of Tide Head. On the river and below Sugarloaf Mountain, a tall paper mill chimney's smoky plume served as its own white flag of industry against the blue sky. Fortunately we were still upwind of the mill, breathing clean air. We landed at the municipal beach which had a park and picnic tables. Out in the shallow water two fishermen in hip boots cast time and again into the Restigouche, exercising without a catch.



Under Sugarloaf Mountain, the town of Tide Head has a municipal beach and a park for takeout.

Like migrating salmon, seekers of cold, pure fresh water on their annual upstream run, Raphael and I, with the identical primordial urge, agreed to return next year for our downstream run on a New Brunswick river. I can never spend enough time on such beautiful waters. Without any sense of exaggeration we both believed ourselves blessed and truly rich, reveling with each paddle stroke on the Restigouche, "A good river for canoeing."

Practical Information for the Kedgwick-Restigouche Rivers

An experienced whitewater canoeist with adequate maps should be able to lead a trip safely on these rivers.

An excellent and essential map, Restigouche River and Kedgwick River/La Rivière Restigouche et La Rivière Kedgwick, is available from Land Registration and Information Service, New Brunswick Department of Tourism,

Recreation and Heritage, P.O. Box 12345, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada E3B 5C3, Tel: (800) 561-0123

For those who prefer a guided trip, one outfitter is currently available: André Arpin, Arpin Canoë Restigouche, 8. Chemin Arpin, Kedgwick River, New Brunswick, Canada E8B 1R9, Tel.: (506) 284-3140, Toll-free: (877) 259-4440, Fax: (506) 284-2769 -mail: canot@nb.sympatico.ca, Website: www.canoe-restigouche.ca.



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Most of you who have read my comments for the past few years by now SURELY KNOW I really NEED my boats like some sort of water addict. The water beckons and eventually I must answer. Yesterday, December 16, '06, here in the deep poverty-stricken south, it was a beautiful, heavenly day. For quite a few weeks I have been longing for the feeling of water while I sit high and dry adrift. Sipping morning coffee under an old oak and feeling uplifted with a sweet southern breeze, it occurred to me that I needed to take a walk down to the beaver pond for some exercise and a chance to see a few wild ducks, maybe a deer. We had exceptionally dry conditions this past summer so I had an opportunity to clean out the beaver pond.

For the first time since my moving here when the pond was completely dry and supported the weight of my tractor, on this beautiful morning I had to see how it looked full of water and all the brush gone. To my surprise we now have a small, pretty lake. Makes me wish I had done a bit more, deepened it more and cleared the channel to the bayou better. The bayou is small by my standards, only about 18' to 22' wide most places and 5' or 6' deep. I had always referred to it as a creek until I went up north last July. While visiting up there I saw a creek which looks like a drainage ditch, yet they called it a creek.

Even though my creek is not as big as most bayous, it is deep and wide enough to enjoy paddle boating. So, to differentiate from a drainage ditch, I call it a bayou. I have actually run a motorboat in it before. However, I enjoy the silence of a paddle boat better. This creek provides wonderful private secluded boating. However, from time to time trees or limbs will fall into the stream and choke the way to the beaver dam. That happened last year when a large oak blew over in a storm. Every enjoyable trip must include the beaver dam and pond. We did not have access to the beaver dam at all last year.

This summer I wanted to cut the offending limbs and clean a path, but snakes and I do not enjoy being in the same area at the same time so I found other places to go boating. Every now and again the old shot gun and I would pay the snakes a visit down at the creek where that large offending tree was lying. I was working hard to give them the message that it would be better if they just moved away. With the cooling of the water and a smaller snake population, I felt that it was finally safe to work on clearing the channel. To make things even better, the creek is totally full at the moment. One scary thing about a low water creek is those banks full of holes and places for a snake to strike head high into your boat. With those banks submerged and the boat sitting very high above them, I felt safe.

A couple of years ago in this same area I had my grandkids in the 10' boat and was forced very close to the left bank due to low limbs on the right bank. The creek was not full. Luckily I was running a motor. On the bank I could see the root ball of a fallen oak. There was a large snake in the root ball within striking range. He was so close I could have reached out and placed my cap over his head to keep the kids from panicking and turning the boat over. I did not show them the snake until we were safely past.

While we were in danger I simply said, "kids, sit very still do not put your hand on the side of the boat and do not move because

A Boating Adventure

By Chief Redelk Many Nations
chiefmanynations@yahoo.com

(Submitted by Rob Rohde-Szudy
"I don't want to see the chief's writing drift away into cyber-nothingness").

there may be snakes in this area and IF you move they may strike." The kids sat like little statues as the boat glided past the snake with its head held high watching us slide by. I believe the vibrations of the motor may have held his attention since we were idling along with a 6 horse gas engine thumping out a rhythm. I dreaded the trip back upstream but had no choice. For that journey I placed the kids out of reach on the opposite side of the boat and watched out for the snake but thankfully it was gone. Later I came back with my shotgun and me and a snake that looked a lot like him had a talk. May have been the same snake, if not maybe his cousin.

Launching the boat yesterday had been easy. With the small scow carried on the tractor I was able to get close to the water. The beavers have created a smaller drainage all the way to high ground, perfect for a boat dock. I was able to launch and get inside the boat without wetting a foot. Redfern, my ever faithful wife, does not like riding in a 7'2" long boat carrying my big fat body. Forgot to mention she ain't no little girl either. So she opted to walk along the bank and keep me company. Actually, the boat will carry both of us just fine but telling her that is like talking to Mother Nature.

The boat I choose for my BIG ADVENTURE is the tiny little scow I had designed for my daughter one boring summer day. I cut out the pieces and with daddy giving advice from time to time it was put together and painted. Back then she was only 12 and now she's almost 17. Doing the math the boat is about four years old going on five. Since this boat gets used very little it sits in the weather year round falling into disrepair. Inspection revealed that boat was in bad need of paint waiting for my daughter to come home and spend some time with it. I had already stored it in the barn but for my adventure I choose to find a way to use it without a lot of work.

No good boater will put a boat in water with cracked and chipped paint on the hull. We simply know water will soak the wood and damage the boat. However, this was sort of an emergency. Kinda like when a smoker leaves church after sitting for hours and hours listening to a preacher drone on and on like an old diesel engine. Puts me to sleep, too. Downright relaxing. Most smokers almost tear the door down with the last Amen. So my mighty mouse brain came up with a great idea.

Here is the fixer. I took some of that old black roofing tar called roofing cement that comes soft and mushy so you can smear it over a leaking roof. Down here in the south (except maybe some folks who live over in Ruston, not calling no names) we all got that stuff laying round in buckets. To be without it would actually be embarrassing. Can you imagine it's raining cats and dogs one night and your neighbor knocks on your door sometime over in the morning 'fore daylight saying, "Can I borrow a cuppa yore roofing

cement the roof is at it again?" So we just keep it on hand along with alcohol (both the rub-on and the drink-down type), salt wid or widout iodine, flour, beans, and other staples.

Well, what I did to fix that boat was this. I got a big bunch of that goeey black stuff, put it in a jar, added paint thinner, and began to shake it like crazy. When it was mixed up real good 'bout like gravy, I painted the whole boat, making sure it was brushed into every little crack-n-cranny. While that was drying I cut out a boat paddle from a 3/4" pine board. It takes me about an hour to make a decent paddle (decent to me means you would be ashamed to be seen with it, but it works) so I was working while the tar was setting.

Finally the paddle was completed, blade kinda feathered and all. Then it got a good soaking, too, with black goo until it was blackern' a mix breed just to make sure it was sealed up good 'n tight and waterproof. Then I went inside, washed up, drank some more of that good old coffee, and waited for a while longer. After the coffee break the tractor carrying the boat and my other good stuff was crunk and off we went.

Finally got the boat in the water, stepped inside, and just sat there afloat. A silence overtook the entire world. People in Baghdad stopped setting roadside bombs and enjoyed a moment of peace. It was as if I was a boy again, sitting in church singing to the angels while the sun rays lighted up those pretty stained glass windows and the little girl behind me giggled as her momma shhhhd her. Yep, it was a spiritual experience as if the heavens opened up and I heard a loud voice saying, "You got it right boy, you did a good job designing this boat." I looked at Redfern as she stood in silence patiently waiting for me to take the cell phone from her delicate hand. She did not seem overjoyed, "the unbeliever" she is did not hear a thing. Maybe a crow in the distance.

Pushing off I whispered to Redfern that we must be quiet and not stir up the animals. With a J-stroke the boat glided southward, happy to be on its own after sitting so long. I looked at the chines and the deck beneath my feet, not one drop of water anywhere. Smiling, I made another silent pass with the paddle never clearing the water. We broke into another world. It was as if the boat had been dead and I had given it a new life. Raising it from the dead, I was the savior of old boats, hallelujah!

Redfern is just naturally one of those quiet people, walking quietly, talking softly type of ladies so with her walking the bank and me in the boat we drifted along in almost complete silence. Shortly, to my surprise, she whispered for me to slow the boat down. Seems she was being left behind. How can a scow actually roll? How can a scow be paddled so easily, almost effortless while moving faster than a person can walk? I realized how much I liked this boat. This little boat is only 29" wide, flat on the bottom, with a skeg attached to the aft rise. The skeg does not catch on logs. The bow doesn't seem to be pushing much water. Maybe because it has so much rake. If I achieve proper balance, the boat acts a lot like a canoe. Is not tippy as some canoes and is a honey on flat water.

This past summer I had cleared the creek banks. It now affords comfortable walking. Last year only me and a few other wild men would have tried walking through that mass of vines and brush. Finally the boat neared that old offending oak tree that had

been blocking the creek for much too long. I drifted into the mass and grabbed the first limb. It was about 3" thick. With my trusty bow saw in hand I began to cut into the hard dry limb. Did I say trusty bow saw? I meant rusty bow saw. Finally I realized I need a new saw blade or all day to cut the limb.

So I shoved the boat under and went to the next one. I thought this one is going to be easier, it's much smaller. I was thinking like a third grader sizing up a fight with a first grader. Attacking in a flurry I was surprised at how tough the limb was. Some first graders you don't mess with. Finally the limb gods felt sorry for me and broke it making a way to proceed. Momentarily, that is. I soon realized I was firmly stuck in submerged brush and going nowhere fast.

Suddenly the bank appeared to be miles away. Working to stay calm, knowing that Redfern may be able to haul me a line if things got worse, I regained my confidence. With the paddle working feverishly I rocked back and forth, finally pulling free. I realized this boat has a 3/4" ply bottom and I breathed a deep sigh of relief as I heard the sound of scraping brush beneath. We inched forward. Maybe this is why I have not built that fabric over frame boat just yet? I knew a broken and sharp pointed tree limb just cut a groove along the remaining coat of bottom paint. Many times I have gone over whole tree stumps and been hung up on them. That is why I like a nice, thick, wooden boat bottom.

The fight ended with a rush, the boat was gliding happily toward the beaver dam complete with its relieved and ecstatic cargo, me. Soon Redfern was behind, out of sight. The brush in this area had not been cleared and she was somewhere in the trees at a standstill. I was working my way up a narrow channel leading into the pond when the boat hit something and stopped dead still. I could see Redfern peeking through the brush at a distance. Waving to let her know I was OK, I went back to my job of getting the boat to the pond.

I realized something submerged was angled almost all way across the channel, probably a tree, so with the boat shoved against the right bank, I was able to get the bottom of the boat partly on top of the log. It was shallow here and the scow has much for-

ward rake. With the paddle on the bottom I firmly jammed the bow against the log. Shifting forward the boat rocked like gram-paw's old chair and over the log we went. Can't imagine how to do that with two people in the boat. Only one person in this boat can go almost anywhere in about 4" of water. Two of these boats and you could take a friend boating and have a ball. More things to see in backwaters where those big boats never dare go. Finally I broke into the clearing and found the water to be about 5' deepest point and in some places 5" or 6".

Leaving the pond I was almost back to the wood line when I heard the sound of rushing wind and wings beating the air. Out of nowhere ducks I had seen earlier in the day were pouring back in. They had not seen me or Redfern and were landing all over the place. There were so many coming so fast I thought surely they had seen me and just were not afraid. How could they miss a man in a boat and a lady standing on the bank? How wrong I was. Sensing the presence of Redfern and me, they panicked. We had rushing wings all over the place for a few glorious seconds as they vanished into the woods.

Retracing my course I came to the boat landing, but could not force myself to leave the wonderful feeling being on the water. Seems as if the little boat, proud to be free at last, had the same feelings and we quickly

glided northward, upstream, without looking back. It was not long before I could hear Redfern in the distance calling out to me. She must have thought the boat was holding me prisoner. Being raised in the woods it is against every fiber of my being to shout or make noises in the wild so I did not answer. Another shout from her and I realized she must be truly worried, so before she called 911 and embarrassed me, I decided to do something to let her know I was OK. With my trusty cell phone, I called. The signal was weak and cracking up, but after assuring her I was fine I moved on.

Finally coming to a bend in the stream I reluctantly turned the boat and headed back for land. Once the boat was pulled from the water I unloaded the rest of my junk from the tractor. There was an old metal bed frame which was quickly erected and the boat placed upside down on the bed frame to keep it off the dirt. A sheet of tin 36" wide about 8' long was laid over the entire boat. Next I tied everything down and cut branches to cover the entire boat. Leaving a paddle and life vest under the boat, we returned home.

Using the cell phone I called Little Bear in Texas. Telling her where I was and what I had been doing charged her with excitement. Daddy, I am coming home in about a week, we gotta get back in the water, she exclaimed excitedly.

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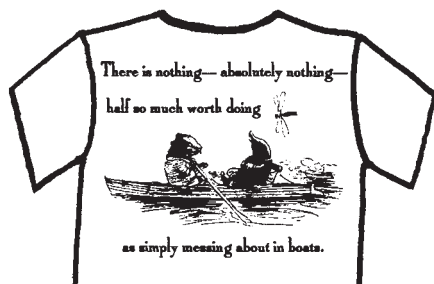
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It was one of those rare outings when the kids were all accounted for and attended to and I could stay out sailing as long as I wanted. I packed a lunch, a fishing rod, and a lure as we had seen flocks of sea birds working and schools of feeding fish breaking the surface. Maybe they were bluefish, the legendarily voracious sport fish so prized by my father and millions of other fishermen. I also brought a roasting pan from the Holiday House kitchen. I didn't have fishing net and if I caught a nice blue I would need something to scoop it up with and the pan would keep it for dinner.

Winds were nearly calm and the sailing had been a little slow for my taste. But halfway back to shore I saw some common terns hovering and diving, some coming up with silverside minnows, and down on the water's surface white explosions that can only mean bluefish on the hunt. I knew that the boat's presence would make all the fish sound, both hunters and prey, so I dropped the sail and kept us pointed into the wind with occasional quiet strokes of the paddle. I hoped the school would drift towards me.

I had time to make a few practice casts before the action started. I noticed that the birds included not only the conventional common terns and herring gulls, but also black headed gulls I'd never seen before. This was an especially big school and the loud splashes denoted big blues below. Steadily the schooling came closer to the Snark until a loud splash 10' off the boat startled the dickens out of me. Perhaps the fact that the boat was drifting in rhythm with the random weeds and wrack on the surface had made the boat's appearance less alarming to the fish.

The Bluefish Takes the Lure

Carefully I resumed casting and my heart leapt to see a big splash within a couple of feet of where my lure had dropped in. My pole tip slightly flexed each time I cranked the reel slowly in. Suddenly the rod whipped and twitched dramatically and I knew I'd hooked a big one. The boat pivoted slightly in response to the fish's tugs. This was the first time in 25 years that I'd hooked a blue and the old thrill came back in electric pulses as I focused on the shivering chrome eyelet at the tip of the rod and felt the erratic hard tugs on the line. Slowly I reeled in the fish, being careful not to tear the hook out of its mouth or break the line.

I was thrilled to see the bright flash of the fish's side as it came alongside the boat. It was a bluefish all right and it was vigorously disgorging the contents of its stomach in a desperate effort to cough out the hook. I saw a couple of butterfish intact, about the size of a quarter, spewing out of that big mouth along with some unidentifiable chunks. Lacking a net, I raised high the rod with one hand while I got the roasting pan under the fish. With the fish half in the pan I was able to get it up over the Snark's low gunwales with the line stretched tight.

The fish was about a foot and a half long and weighed about four pounds. It was small as blues went but it was a keeper and I was already imagining how it would taste. There was the unmistakable scent of fresh fish that came most strongly from the fish I'd caught but also from the surface of the water. Bluefish schools tend to consist of fish all the same age and size. Since they kill and eat any kind of fish they can, including their own,

Snark Bytes:

Bluefish, Dolphins, and "Bob"

By Rob Gogan



any fish younger than the rest will soon be eaten. I wondered if this one would be missed by its brothers and sisters. I doubted it. Even so, my family and I needed nutrition, too. We ate meat and fish so rarely that I didn't feel like we were tearing too big a hole in the biosphere by removing this bluefish from its school in the harbor.

In those days I never killed the keeper fish I caught but let them die on their own. My brother Matt later showed me the knife wound in a fluke he'd caught on a charter fishing trip. The head boat captain always killed the keepers quickly by knife rather than letting them gasp to death out of the water. In his opinion, it was not only more merciful to the fish, it also prevented the fish from releasing hormones into its bloodstream which degraded the taste of the flesh. The mercy aspect made sense to me and though it is a more brutal way to kill the fish, it is a good way to remind me more clearly of the deadly consequences of being a fish eater.

The Fish in the Bottom of the Boat

After removing the hook and tidying up the line, I raised the sail again, dropped the daggerboard, and sailed back. Once on the beach and de-rigged, I carried the fish up to the house. My brother-in-law Alan happened to be outside and saw the fish. He was impressed with its size, having been used to seeing the little "pumpkinseed" sunfish about as big as a modest pancake that he and his son caught in freshwater ponds. When I cleaned the fish I found five other little fish more or less intact in the stomach of the bluefish. The predator becomes the prey, I thought.

We grilled the filets wrapped in foil over charcoal. Frann took a serving and I took two. It was delicious and enough was left over to make a cold salad for lunch the next few days. Catching part of our daily nutrition in the wild, right outside the house, under power of sail was gratifying. We were reading the *Clan of the Cave Bear* series at the time, with its frequent references to Stone Age hunters and their game. I imagined part of the vigor, grace, and life force of the bluefish flowing into Frann and me. I hoped to do it justice.

We saw the school feeding several times over the next few days and several times I went out in the Snark and reduced its number by one more. Little did I know of the changes the weather would bring to the fauna and its habitat.

The Bluefish Disappear

One Sunday the weather forecasters started talking about a tropical storm named "Bob." It was tracking to hit land in southern New England, right where we were on Cape Cod. When we went out to the beach I scanned the horizon for birds, as I always did, but today I saw none. I went back in the house for binoculars and even with them I saw no birds. At first I was disappointed that there would be no fishing that day. The air was too still for sailing anyway.

The next day, Monday, I was scheduled to go to work. But with the weather forecast promising a hurricane, I decided to stay home and help get my young family to higher ground at the local vocational technical school. My boss was understanding of my need to help secure my family as the weather forecasters were pulling out all the stops to warn people to get away from the shore. Before we left for the school, with the air dead calm, we saw our neighbor, Mrs. Wilson, on Rocky Point looking out at the water with a few other people. We walked over to them and asked what they were looking at and they pointed out to an area where the water was breaking and showing white foam.

Amazingly, the unmistakable dorsal fins of dolphins broke the surface in merry arcs as the dolphins inhaled and exhaled. "First time we've ever seen them here," said the octogenarian Mrs. Wilson. We speculated that the dolphins had somehow sensed the approach of the storm and decided to come to the sheltered harbor to escape its ravages. We would have liked to sail or paddle out to them for a closer look but we had to get settled at the storm shelter. Besides, the Snark was secure and snug, ready for the onslaught, and we didn't want to disturb it.

Hurricane Bob Strikes

Many a boat did get disturbed. Around the rim of Phinney's Harbor, we counted 32 boats that had been washed onto dry land. The strong wind and nine-foot storm surge had pulled many boats off their moorings and onto the lee shore. Many houses also were flooded and some tilted askew. When the tide comes that high the sandy soil turns into quicksand and the house foundations turned into concrete boats that floated and even pitched with the waves.

My sister Jill and her family decided to stay in the house and ride out the storm. Jill took extensive video footage showing waves crashing against the seawall, tree limbs bobbing and bending in the high winds, and boats ripped off their moorings getting washed to shore. Jill said there was no one on board any of the boats they saw washing to shore. The wind and waves must have pushed so hard on the mooring lines that they either came untied or broke.

The biggest boats that washed ashore near us were a 30' cabin cruiser with flying bridge and a very high profile that must have caused tremendous drag. That boat washed up on the Mashnee Dike beach about 100 yards from the Holiday House seawall. The other was a 40' ketch that was lifted up and over Mrs. Wilson's seawall at the tip of

Rocky Point. The boat was washed up very close to the house.

That boat and several other high and dry yachts were retrieved by a big twin rotor Chinook helicopter and four coordinated crews that charged \$1,000 per minute of flight time. The first team removed any masts or outriggers and slipped three or four big slings underneath the hull. Then the chopper team would come in and hover in place, lowering a big hook. Once the ground crew had hooked up the slings, the helicopter would lift the whole assembly up into the air and fly out over the harbor. It was amazing to see the yachts spin like toys 50' in the air. There was a boat crew waiting there to remove the slings and secure the rescued yacht, towing it back to a pre-determined reclamation area. Meanwhile, another ground crew was lining up the next yacht. I timed one of the rescues and the boat was on the hook nearly five minutes. That's a quick \$5,000, I told my mother, watching next to me.

Apparently Mrs. Wilson's seawall was a couple of feet lower than the one at Holiday House as her house was much the worse for after the storm. The storm waves had penetrated the bay window in her living room and swept it out, spilling stucco, furniture, lumber, and other debris all over the front lawn. I don't think the house was made habitable again for three or four years.

Bob's Ravages Madden the Bees

The storm came and went with hardly any rain. The storm's tropical air was humid but it was not 100%, and with 90+ mile-per-hour gusts, even 99% humid air is dry enough to dessicate. Many bushes and small trees were completely denuded in the days after the storm and leaf clusters at the tips of white oak branches turned brown and withered in succeeding days, rattling in the breezes. In the absence of flower nectar, which the day before had been provided abundantly by the beach roses (*rosa rugosa*), many insects were hungry and therefore more aggressive than before. After a couple of bee stings the little cousins were afraid to go outside. Just the sight of a yellow jacket wasp sent them running for the house in a panic. Somehow I convinced Josh and his cousin Chris to come out for a row to the Back River by pointing out that bees and wasps didn't like to fly out over water.

The cousins were content to ride along with me rowing. At just under five, neither of them was big enough to work the oars. Before rounding Rocky Point we rowed around the Split Rock. This boulder was about 6' high and at the right tide we could just fit the rowboat through the channel through its middle. Our oars kept going through the tiny channel.

We rowed quietly past the gulls and cormorants on Rocky Point and headed down the Back River. Though rowing against the tide we had the wind behind us. We beached the skiff and tied it up on a fallen cedar branch. We had a quick scramble up the bluff and we were next to the railroad tracks. The only train after 6am was the "trash train" at 4:45pm so there was little danger of a train coming through now. I pointed out a Queen Ann's Lace that survived the storm and pulled it from the ground. I smelled the root and offered it to them.

Bob Spares a Wild Carrot

"Does this smell like anything you like to eat?" I asked them. "It smells like a carrot," Chris said wondrously and I explained that it was indeed a wild form of the vegetable. Josh also agreed that it smelled like a carrot but he was too busy looking for bees to enjoy himself much. Soon a yellow jacket took interest in us and started flying closely around my head. Fortunately neither of the boys noticed it.

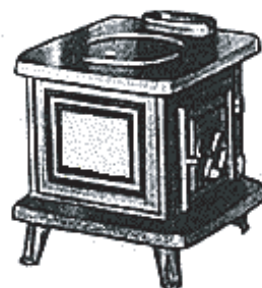
"Time to head back," I said, and I took each of the boys by the hand and started walking them down the steep bluff. Fortunately they had to watch closely where they stepped or they would have spotted the yellow jacket now flying near the back of my arm. For one of the boys to get stung now would not only ruin the fun of the adventure, it could also cause a more dangerous fall. The wasp landed on my forearm and I could feel it walking around. I knew that if I could have let go of Josh's hand and kept my arm still, the wasp would have flown away shortly without incident. But I couldn't let go under the circumstances and Josh's clammy fingers jerked as he took irregular steps down the bluff.

"Do you think there are any bees around here?" Josh asked.

"Well, I know there won't be any bees once we get on the WATER..." Suddenly, the wasp got pinched between Josh's wrist and mine and I felt the intense 10-second sting of the yellow jacket. Though it hurt, I was at the same time glad the wasp stung me and not Josh. "Bees don't like the water," I said, continuing the conversation nonchalantly as my wrist burned. Amazingly, neither of the boys noticed and we piled into the rowboat and shoved off. I discreetly rubbed some cooling salt water onto the sting and rowed back home.

The school of blues was long gone. We speculated that the dolphins might have scared them away, eaten them, or eaten the blues' quarry. The dolphins as well were gone within a few days. We heard that they had moved down the coast and were now off Megansett in North Falmouth. They were slowly but steadily finding their way to deeper water now that the storm was gone by. Several years later we learned about a pod of Atlantic white-sided dolphins that had beached themselves further out on the Cape. We hoped this wasn't our pod. We will never know whether or not the dolphins came to Phinney's Harbor to escape the hurricane and, if so, how they knew it was coming.

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Most boat building articles describe (or enthuse over) the positive side of the building or restoration process. They tend to gloss over the little niggling problems that do as much or more than the larger problems to speed the premature aging of a boat builder. So let's talk about some possible cures for some of these little aggravations. Since many of us nowadays are building stitch and glue or glued plywood lapstrake craft, let's consider first some solutions for problems that occur repeatedly with this type of construction.

The stitch part of stitch and glue construction is a loop of wire, a lot of loops of wire. These loops of wire are what attach adjacent panels of plywood to each other while they are glued together using epoxy. In brief, these are the only clamps used to hold the boat together while the glue sets up. As such, they are essential. However, once they have served that purpose, they all should come out but the glue has usually set up around the stitches and they won't. Furthermore, the glue has mounded up around the stitches and left areas hard to sand.

So, Tip #1: Chamfer the edges of your planks carefully so you have a good fit, then wick clear epoxy (without any filler) into the spaces between the stitches. Once this first batch of glue has set up, remove the stitches and then do your fillets and taping. Your stitches will come out easily and your fillets and tapes will look much better.

Tip #2. Sometimes it is essential, as in the ends of a kayak, to make glue fillets while the stitches are still in place. All is not lost. In the first place, as long as you have used soft copper wire, you can cut the stitches off flush with the surface and leave the buried wire in place (this works best, however, if you are going to paint the surface since otherwise the wire ends will show). If you do not wish to ignore the wire ends, then you may use heat to remove them.

First cut the wire loops you want to remove, leaving ends long enough to grasp with pliers, about $\frac{1}{2}$ " long. Grasp one of these ends with a pair of pliers and heat the pliers with a heat gun (this is a blow dryer on steroids). About the time the pliers grow too hot to hold, the wire should pull out. Do not point the heat gun at your boat unless you fancy a charred look. Instead, make sure your heat gun is parallel to the surface of your boat so the blast of hot air does not strike the surface.

Tip #3: When building a stitch and glue craft the thing that will most affect the final appearance is getting the edges of the planks and the edges of the puzzle or scarf joints joining the separate pieces absolutely even. This is essential because the layers of veneer making up the plywood planks are exceedingly thin. Thus, if you have to sand at all to level a surface or joint you are bound to sand through into a ghastly layer of black glue, which will advertise to the entire world that you screwed up there.

The trick, then, is to get it right. When assembling puzzle joints hold them absolutely flush and tack them in that position with a few drops of fast setting cyanoacrylate (CA or "crazy") glue. Then wick in your epoxy and weight or clamp. When doing scarf joints, which are particularly prone to slip when you glue them, get them positioned correctly and drive some small nails or clamp the planks to a surface, some distance away from the actual scarf joint. By doing this you ensure that the two pieces will not change

Building Tips From a Lazy Boat Builder

By Dave Jackson

position. Now gently lift up the top plank of the scarf and apply your epoxy, then weight or clamp.

In the same vein, if two plank edges will simply not stay even regardless of how much you tighten the surrounding stitches, hold them even by hand and apply a few drops of CA.

Tip #4: Another faux pas that is hard to live down is a boat that is crooked or twisted. Although stitch and glue designs, by their nature, assume the desired shape, there is enough "give" in an unglued hull that the stem(s) may very well not be at right angle to the sheer (top of the hull) and the sheer itself may twist from one end of the boat to the other.

The cure is simple. Get yourself a couple of sticks of wood (1"x2" or similar) long enough to span the two sides of the craft. For some reason these are called winding sticks. Rest the two winding sticks across the two sides, more or less at right angles to the centerline and some distance apart. Now stand back a ways and sight over the nearer stick to the farther one. If the two sticks appear to be parallel, then your craft is not twisted. At the same time, look at the stem. Does it appear to be at right angles to your winding sticks? If all is well, then wick glue into the joints between the planks before moving anything.

If your craft is twisted, enlist a helper. Each of you grab an end of the craft and carefully "unwind" any twist and straighten the stem. The procedure is to tweak and sight, tweak and sight, sneak up on it until it looks right.

Tip #5: Suppose you have done all the above, glued the craft, and then (woe is me!) discover that some planks slipped and set up while not in line. This sort of incident typically leads around our shop either to a sudden decision to paint a hull after all (to hide the resulting sand through) or to a strategically placed decoration (wouldn't you like your initials there?).

However, if you really are intent on having a clear, varnished finish and if initials or an inlay of a mallard would look ridiculous covering the offending spot, then all is not lost. Take your trusty heat gun, the thinnest putty knife you can find, and a shop knife with a new blade. Use the shop knife to score along the seam in the offending area, just enough to be able to get the tip of the putty knife into some part of the seam.

By way of explanation, you are going to use the heat gun to heat the putty knife which, in turn, is going to start breaking down the glue joint along the seam. It is better to transfer the heat from the heat gun indirectly through the putty knife than to aim the gun directly at the joint (guess how I know this?). It is just too hard to control the amount of heat on the wood, so before you know it you will end up with a dark (charred) patch which defeats the purpose of the whole exercise.

In order to do its work the putty knife must contact the seam over some area to transfer heat effectively, which is why we need to give it somewhere to start with the shop knife. It will go very slowly at first but eventually, particularly once the knife is

entirely in the seam, it will go much faster. Open the seam up as far as you have to and then reposition the two sides so they are even. Put a few stitches or some CA in the joint to hold it and re-glue. Usually this repair only widens the seam slightly, if done carefully, so the repair is not conspicuous.

Many stitch and glue craft are supposed to be covered with fiberglass on the outside. Some are also supposed to be lined with fiberglass on the inside as well, or at least the seams are supposed to be reinforced with fiberglass tape. Whatever you do, follow the designer's specifications since the strength added by the fiberglass is probably essential to the structural integrity of the craft. There are three main problems builders have with fiberglassing; not rounding their edges so the glass cloth won't lie flat over the edge, not working out all the wrinkles and, most importantly of all, applying too much epoxy on the first coat when the cloth is being saturated. Taking these problems in order:

Tip #6: Fiberglass cloth absolutely will not stay flat to the surface unless any sharp angles are rounded. How much rounding is necessary depends, I think, upon the weight of the cloth, the type of weave, the angle, and other factors, but for 6oz plain weave cloth, at least a $\frac{3}{16}$ " to $\frac{1}{4}$ " radius appears desirable. Don't be misled by its going down initially when you are working it, it is sneaky and is likely to detach from one side or the other of a seam when your back is turned. Obviously, if it sets up this way you have lost any strength across the joint which is what you wanted. There is nothing to do but sand out the detached areas and apply a new layer.

Tip #7: Fiberglass cloth is loosely woven and will mold itself to almost any hull shape if you work it carefully. Make sure when you brush or squeegee epoxy that you don't bunch it up in one place but always work away from any wrinkles or folds. Sometimes, certainly, it is necessary to cut the fabric and lay one side of the cloth over the other to get rid of a fold, but this should be an absolute last resort. Not only have you lost the integrity of the cloth, but you end up with a double layer of cloth to fair in. Make sure you get the cloth to lay down without scallops all the way to any edge. Trim the cloth back to just beyond any edge so the stuff hanging down doesn't pull it loose.

Tip #8: Finally, and most important, only put enough epoxy on the cloth to wet it out. I can't emphasize this too much. While it is essential that the cloth be thoroughly "wet out," i.e., saturated everywhere so the cloth becomes transparent and there are no white spots, any more epoxy than the minimum necessary to accomplish this causes huge problems.

What this means, because of the mechanics of getting the epoxy where you want it, is that you are going to pour or roller epoxy (by way of example) down the center of your upside down hull, using gravity and a squeegee to spread it down the sides. West Marine makes yellow plastic squeegees that work well, although my own preference is for expired plastic credit cards. Whatever you use, and however you do it, keep dragging excess epoxy off the bottom edge or scraping it up and putting it in a waste cup until all that remains is the epoxy absorbed in the cloth. There should be no shiny spots, no puddles of epoxy whatsoever.

I can hear you cringing at the thought of putting all that very expensive epoxy on your craft and then scraping much of it back off and

throwing it away. You are going to put one or two more coats of epoxy on top of the first one in order to fill the weave, so what is wrong with getting a head start on this build-up?

What we have determined is that fiberglass cloth, given the opportunity, will not stay next to the wood panel but will "float up" in a thick coating of liquid epoxy. As a result, the cloth seems to undulate up and down from place to place, depending on the thickness of the layer of epoxy. Thus, in some places it is sitting down on the wood, while in others it is up near the surface. Adding to the problem, as epoxy cures, particularly in a thick layer, it seems to heat up and grow thinner. Whether this is in fact the case or not, as it cures it certainly runs and sags if you give it the opportunity to do so.

The end result is two significant problems. First, as you try to sand the surface smooth you sometimes sand through the cloth where it is up near the surface of the epoxy, destroying the integrity of the cloth and defeating the purpose of applying it. Second, runs, sags, and puddles are almost impossible to sand out. If you try to eliminate them you risk sanding through the cloth in adjacent areas, or even into the wood. By and large, once you let the surface get lumpy it is going to stay that way.

For all these reasons I strongly recommend a uniform, minimum first coat and then (for 6oz cloth) two more thin coats brushed/rollered/squeegeed out real well so there isn't enough epoxy anywhere to run. The foregoing suggestions should do a lot to prevent the

sort of aggravation and consequent delay that subtract from the building experience.

A number of these suggestions apply to glued plywood lapstrake construction also and, in fact, to any situation where you are covering a structure with fiberglass or coating it with epoxy. I've written enough for now and, in fact, may have exceeded what our kind editor is prepared to print. If there is sufficient demand, perhaps on some other occasion we could explore the peculiarities of glued lapstrake and another time touch upon the decisions you need to make when restoring an old boat. As usual, feel free to contact me, as a number of you have. I enjoy speaking with people, and not infrequently learn something myself. My e-mail is Dojackson@aol.com and my cell phone is (203) 414-0937.

If you're old enough to remember when Lee Marvin and Clint Eastwood were in a musical together, then you're old enough to appreciate my present quandary. Yes, THE Mr. Dirty Harry himself was in a musical. I gotta admit, *Paint Your Wagon* is one of my all time favorites. And Lee Marvin's "departure" song tops my personal list of soliloquies. In "Wandrin' Star" I think he sums up the dichotomy in most boat peoples' world. "...home is good for comin' from, and dreams of goin' to, which with any luck will never come true..."

We buy, and keep, our boats more for what we MIGHT do with them, much more than what we DO do with them. Granted, this happens more in the over-30 (that is 30') crowd than in most of the messable boats we keep, and treasure, and love, and talk about, and... maybe haven't gotten near the water in longer than we should admit to. But I gotta admit it myself when I'm replacing a lower shroud chainplate, for example, I'm picturing a roaring gale, (as Glenn Yarbrough warbles) "seas up to yer knees," and a steel-taught storm jib humming a dirge, much more than the probable REAL reason the fitting was suspect in the first place.

So, What ARE Boats Good For?

By Dan Rogers

You know. The damn thing has been dripping into the hanging locker for several years now and every rainy season (we have one of those in San Diego) that much reheaped gob of spread-just-before-the-drops-silicone has turned more into a reservoir than a gasket. That's really why I would have taken it loose, to even see the stress cracks in the clevis pin that led to the "Victory at Sea" instant replay in my head in the first place. I admit it.

I don't have a small family of kayaks clustered on the sides of Fiddler's Green in order to paddle sedately up and down the rows of never-underway floating wedding cake palaces stationed strategically around our marina to ensure that the docks don't sink. Nooooo, not me. I collected those little plastic boats with a mind's eye steadily fixed on descending the Colorado in flood, watching the otters dive around the arch at

Anacapa, or, who knows, finally returning to the backwoods whirlpools of the lower Pend Orielle while the leaves turn scarlet and rim ice forms in my coffee cup left out overnight.

But what do those little boats REALLY get used for? Yeah, taking visiting kids and dirt dwellers out for a little excursion to study the really interesting boat names people put on their floating palaces here in Southern Cal. (I think just about half of the boats registered in Arizona, and there's a lot of 'em, had to be called *Escape*. And all the rest are named *Tranquility* or one of the romance language based synonyms.) I admit it. That's what those boats get used for. But it's not what I THINK about using them for.

Which brings me back to Lee and Clint. We messers, we sailors, we paddlers and peddlers, we rowers and drifters are pure and simple, DREAMERS. Day dreamers. My boat(s) are not for what I'm doing right now, or even for what I'm going to do. No, they're mostly kept around as tangible memory aids in that voyage most of us weigh anchor for each and every day, the voyage we take in our hopes, wishes, and our daydreams. Day Dreams. Hey, now there's a cute name for a little clinker hulled nutshell, don't you think?

Them days are gone forever!

(Advertising from *Fore 'N Aft*, May 15, 1927)

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My grandfather was a Chesapeake Bay sailor all his life until he got too old to handle sail (this was before aluminum masts, power roller-furling, and high-output alternators). A chancery court judge with a proletarian taste in boats, he then bought the *Lady Jane*, a 50' deadrise workboat with a whole lot of cabin built on top.

My uncle inherited the *Lady Jane*, he always said that one of the great things about her was her decidedly non-yachty, workboat finish. He didn't have to agonize over every scratch or ding or even crunch, he could always patch and paint. The way he put it was, if he needed a place to hang his hat aboard the *Lady Jane*, all he had to do was drive a nail.

We just bought a 20' Nelson Silva replica of a Simmons Sea Skiff over Thanksgiving. I've wanted one for years. I saw it in the *MAIB* classifieds and a couple of days later my wife and I cancelled our holiday plans and set out for Maryland, 1,000 miles away, to buy it with money we could have used elsewhere.

Now the Simmons is home and I am messing with it as messers must do. The Awlgrip finish on the foredeck and washboards is past its prime, showing cracks and checking here and there. That lets in the weather and I don't want it to get out of hand. I had a second-hand Bolger Diablo once and I can tell you, once it gets away from you moisture moves mighty fast through plywood. One day I grabbed the gunwale of the Diablo real hard and about put my hand through it. That boat is still in the backyard, mostly gone except for the fiberglass sheathing. The *Lady Jane*, for that matter, eventually succumbed to deferred maintenance and was disposed of by burning. I'm not having any of that on the Simmons. So, I set about to decide what to paint it with and what color and so on.

A few years back I restored a 1963 Glassmaster 19' weekender, fiberglass but with some cracking gelcoat on the decks and cabin top, and that sucker taught me a thing or two. We had no money for expensive finishes but we wanted it to look good, and I did lots of comparisons on the cost of this material versus that until my West Marine and Defender catalogs were dogeared.

Spraying was not an option. No compressor, no paint gun, no money to buy them, and no friends to borrow them from, and then there are the lethal fumes to consider so it was going to have to be brush or roller. I am a decent mechanic and can fashion stuff out of wood, fiberglass, or starboard passably well if I can just overcome my impatience to go boating, but I am just lousy with a paintbrush. Even if I could have afforded Awlgrip and all the required thinners, solvent washes, and whatnot (which I couldn't), my skill level was definitely not up to all that. Maybe it's a birth defect.

Next we looked at the one-part polyurethanes and the traditional alkyd paints. Even if I could handle that roller-and-brush business where you tip the paint with a dry brush the cost was still a little out of reach.

The local fiberglass supply place where I was buying all my resin and cloth turned me on to another possibility, gelcoat. Cheap, durable as hell, and, so they said, no big deal to apply with a brush. Just make sure you apply a thick film so that you can sand down any imperfections and then polish it to a high gloss. Sounded good.

Workboat Finish

By Preston Larus

Worked bad. It was very hard to lay down smooth with a brush so I laid down a lot "so I could sand it out." Turns out gelcoat sands like iron. It was such a fiasco that once I got all that crap sanded back off I was off looking exhaustedly for another solution, because gelcoat sure wasn't it. I'll admit the possibility that a skilled hand maybe could do it like the folks down at the fiberglass place said, but we've already established that I am not a skilled hand. It was starting to look like I would just have to pony up to the cash register at the West Marine store and get some one-part polyurethane, though at this point I was none too confident that even that application was within my limited ability.

Then I met a fellow messer at a boat show who introduced me to DTM. He said DTM was a Pittsburgh Paint acrylic enamel used for industrial applications, like repainting cranes and bulldozers with a decent gloss. He said that it could be sprayed with an airless paint sprayer like the ones they sell to homeowners for doing louvered doors and cane chairs and stuff, if I would thin it first about 10% with Floetrol. He said it was cheap and easy to use and that if I let it cure fully (about three weeks) it would be plenty hard and would not wash off in the rain. Man, I was off in a hurry to find a Pittsburgh Paint store that was open on a Saturday, and I found one, too.

I got a Wagner sprayer at a yard sale for ten bucks, erected a tent of clear plastic (this project was outdoors), and did just what he said. I had to use a little more Floetrol than he recommended but the job came out not half bad. In fact, it looked great. The eggshell finish it had right after spraying actually self-leveled as it dried and it looked like somebody knew what they were doing (sshh). There were a few spots where I messed up, but since observers seldom scrutinize the finished product as pitilessly as the messer himself, I got more than a few compliments on it.

Some years later I read a piece by Dave Carnell which talked about the joys of using regular latex house paint on boats. By that time Dave's point of view made a lot of sense to me. Back to the Simmons, I was a little dismayed to learn that it had Awlgrip on it. I mean, am I actually going to cover Awlgrip with a latex paint? Doesn't Awlgrip sort of require me to keep maintaining it to that lofty standard? I thrashed restlessly contemplating the responsibility of owning an Awlgripped boat, but here's the fact, the only way a boat of mine will get Awlgripped is if I pay a pro to do it and that, besides costing almost as much as a new boat, goes against my grain. Once I reached this conclusion I rested easier and could calmly consider the alternatives.

So I talked to the Pittsburgh Paint folks again. Seems PPG bought out Porter Paints, which has a heck of a lot of stores, so now you can get DTM just about everywhere, even on Saturdays. I wanted to talk to a DTM expert about what kind of surface prep my weathered, cracked Awlgrip might need and so the store guys gave me the cell phone number for the District Manager. They said he was a boater so he would know a lot, just call him Monday morning.

Call him I did, first thing Monday morning. The first thing out of his mouth was that

DTM had no place on a boat, nor did any other water-based paint. I gasped for breath. Pressed for recommendations, he said... (wait for it)... go on down to West Marine and buy what they tell you to buy and sin no more. I was crushed. All of my intelligent messer questions about surface preparation evaporated.

That was this morning. I spent some of the day wrapping my mind around one-part polyurethane, color chips, surface prep, price and availability, and so on. Too bad about the palette just 25 "popular" colors available and none of them really what we want, but what can you do?

I read the application instructions online, sanding, solvent wash, then primer, then sanding and solvent wash and a second coat of primer, then sanding and solvent wash, then first color coat, then sanding and solvent wash, followed by (sweet Jesus) the final coat using, oh yes, the familiar but suspect roller-and-brush tipping method. Paint and primer would be about \$125 and better add \$50 more for the special solvents, thinners, sandpaper, tack cloths, and on and on (better make that \$100 more).

And the time involved! It's a full day between each coat. If it's cool or humid (like it always is in December in southwestern Florida) then it might be even longer.

But even if it's not really the color I've been dreaming of, it sure will be pretty as long as a leaf doesn't fall on the work while it's wet. This is another outdoor job, after all, but I'll tarp up a temporary roof in the yard. Then I imagined a gnat or an ant flailing in my perfectly-applied finish and felt the frustrated, jugular-busting rage... after all that work!

That's when the whole house of cards collapsed. What happened to messing? What the heck do I care what the District Manager says? What happened to my decision to Do As Dave Does and just paint the thing and get on with it? What's more important, using this boat or bragging (oh, probably by April or May) about the almost flawless finish ("Yep, I did it myself")? What would my grandfather and uncle say about all this? All good questions.

Then a dim memory flashed on and brought instant clarity. When I was a teenager my father was about to cut a hole in a huge, authentic oriental rug so he could get an extension cord to reach the table lamp. My mother said something along the lines of that being no way to treat such a fine and expensive rug. My father didn't look up but replied that the rug was worthless if he couldn't actually make use of it and commenced cutting (and here endeth the lesson). I tell you, it was a near miss for my messing career but I snapped out of it and not a moment too soon.

This evening I just got back from Home Depot with a whole gallon of Glidden's best exterior gloss housepaint, tinted to the perfect color. Also in the bag, a quart of Floetrol, some foam rollers, and a quart of Coverstain oil-base primer for the (marine) Bondo, spots ("Bondo and paint'll make it what it ain't," says my pal Tom). Total, \$48.

I'll have the job done by the weekend, it will look just fine, and it will keep weather away from the wood like paint should. When I ding it on the dock, I won't weep, I'll touch it up, wash up with soap and water, and go for a boat ride. I'll paint it again when it needs it, however long Glidden's Best lasts (and in any damned color I please, I might add).

That was a close call, but I'm fine now, thanks.

I used to own a 12' fiberglass center-board sloop. It was perfect for taking the family out sailing on a nice afternoon. We had a lot of fun with it and even took it on vacation with us once or twice, pulling it on its trailer behind our Volvo sedan. My next younger brother Rob and I bought this boat from a friend of his who wanted to sell it together with a British Seagull motor, a jib, a mainsail, a boom, and an only slightly bent aluminum mast for not much money. The problem was that neither Rob nor I felt we could part with even that amount of money what with our kids, mortgages, and wives absorbing so much income. So Rob talked me into sharing the cost.

In a display of the skills Rob acquired when he got his MBA, I wound up owning two-thirds of the boat, having put up thirds of the money. That was easy. Sharing the boat at all was harder. Rob lived on the New Jersey shore. I lived in Connecticut. The sailing season runs later down where Rob lives than up here, and somehow the boat always spent the winter down there. Every summer when it finally warmed up here in Connecticut, I had to drive down to New Jersey to get the boat. Before I could get back on the road we'd have to rewire the trailer lights.

In those days Rob always drove American cars and the wiring of the Volvo lights was different. Later on I found out that dipping the electrical stuff in salt water required rewiring at the beginning of each season anyway. Then I found a way around that by hanging the lights from the transom and running the wires along the mast. I'm not sure this was legal, but it worked. But that's another story and I'm getting ahead of this one.

The drive alone was four hours each way if the traffic through New York City wasn't too bad, and adding on fiddling with the lights it would be an all day project just to get the boat back home. We did this for a few years until Rob got another boat and we swapped out of the deal. He took the motor (which I never used anyway) and I took the boat.

Having the boat in my own back yard was a big improvement but not, as I discovered, a complete solution. I was then faced with the rest of the transportation problem, which had seemed rather insignificant by comparison to an all-day trip to New Jersey but which became more vexatious the more I used the boat. The electrical stuff was still a regular nuisance and the process of getting to the boat launch and into the water was time-consuming enough that I had plenty of time to think about what I was doing and why I was doing it the way I was doing it.

Over a couple years of pondering these issues I came up with a theory, the 1:1 theory. All boats require some work. I don't hate working on a boat. I rather enjoy it. Nor do I hate driving to a launch site. It's usually a pretty nice drive. But I'd rather be out on the water, given the choice, than doing either. My goal is keeping the amount of time spent working on the boat and getting the boat into the water down to about the same amount of time spent on the water. I think that's the best I can hope for and that works out to 1:1.

The best solution for the 1:1 problem is to own a place on the water, especially if you want to go out on that particular body of water most of the time. If you don't, it's only a partial solution. In Connecticut a place on the water can be very expensive, and if you own such a place you can probably afford to keep your boat in a marina and hire someone

Transporting Boats Car Top vs. Trailer

By David Kline

else to work on it. I'm not saying you do, I'm just saying you probably can.

Using a pickup truck to move the boat did occur to me but it wouldn't have worked for the 12' sloop, at least not with the Ford Ranger I used to tow it after the Volvo rusted out and got sold for parts (to an eager buyer, by the way). I could try smaller rowing/sailing boats with the pickup truck but I think that idea really would work best with a jon boat. Then I wouldn't have to deal with a mast which, even if it was fastened down pretty well, would wave around in the wind out in front of the cab and look like a javelin to everyone coming the other way.

Another factor to be considered is wind. With a sailboat when there's no wind, there's no sailing. That's why a motor or oars, or something, a canoe paddle, an old board, my hands, are needed. I've tried them. Oars are good. So is a motor. On the other hand, there are other alternatives.

My solution was a kayak carried on the roof of my 1996 Honda Accord. The kayak was a 15' Wilderness Systems Pamlico double. It weighs 58lbs (they say, I haven't weighed it). At first I just put styrofoam pads on the bottom and hoisted it onto the top of the car. The pads worked just fine as long as I wanted to carry just one boat. The boat, tied down fore and aft and around the middle, went many miles on these pads at highway speeds without any problems. But the scratches on the paint on the roof of the Accord are clear evidence putting the double on top this way isn't easy for someone my size. (I'm 5'6" tall and weigh about 150lbs).

At this point in the thought process I retired and built a few Pygmy boats in my basement with my friends Joyce and Trish who built themselves boats, too. We built four single boats, three 17' and one 14' version of their Arctic Tern. Two of these are mine, the first 17-footer and the 14-footer. At the same time I inherited a Yakima rack from my oldest son. This was good because there is no room for two boats on an Accord's roof without one.

This still left me with the problem of height and how to get the boats onto a rack that was about 4" higher than the car top. I asked around in any number of kayak shops for some better way to do the job and got no satisfactory response until I found a salesman my height. He looked me straight in the eye and told me about a gadget Yakima makes for its racks. This is a steel rod that slides into one of the tubes that goes across the car top. You pull the bar out of the tube and put one end of the kayak up on it for a fulcrum while you lift the other end of the kayak onto the rack.

Yakima makes some highly engineered devices to hold kayaks on the rack. I still use styrofoam pads for several reasons. First of all, they work fine. I don't need anything more elaborate. They slip onto the tubes and stay there with the help of a little duct tape. Every so often I wrap a little more duct tape around just to make sure. Secondly, I have an aversion to highly-engineered things when there's something simpler that will do just as well.


I've helped Joyce (the kayak builder) install (and re-install) Yakima's rather elaborate saddle-type kayak supports on her rack. It's easier for two people than one. I see no advantage in the saddles over the Styrofoam pads. They don't seem to make the boat any more secure. I can see some advantage in the rollers they sell. They may be necessary if you are not too tall and your car top is high.

At home the kayaks hang on plywood supports fastened into the studs on the side of the garage. The rack will go onto the car or come back off in about 10 minutes. The boats go up in another 10 or 15 minutes, depending on how fast I work. They are fastened to the rack by woven nylon straps and tied down fore and aft to the car's towing loops. The arrangement is very secure as I dawdle along on cruise control at 70 while my fellow citizens sail by.

The other advantage of cartopping a kayak (or canoe for that matter) is that I am out of the melee if the launch ramp is busy. I just drop the boat in the water off to the side and stay out of everyone's way. And there are some places around here I can launch a kayak or canoe but I could never launch anything from a trailer.

I have a couple other thoughts. Experience has taught me to keep cockpit covers on when I drive. That way rain won't get into the cockpit, slosh around, and cause anxiety. The other thought has to do with getting water out of the cockpit, whatever the source. I keep a sponge in the boat. A good sponge will empty a cockpit very efficiently. It's easy to use when I am out on the water. And it makes it easier to put the boat on the top of the car if I remove all the extra weight first. (That should be obvious, but I've learned that from experience, too).

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If you are uncertain about taking on the project of building yourself a kayak, I recommend purchasing my book, *The Strip Built Sea Kayak*. It is a comprehensive instruction on the whole process, from choosing a design, through setup, to stripping and fiberglassing, and how to fit out the completed craft. It will give you the confidence you need to take on the project.

My Guillemot Kayaks web site also provides a variety of information and support for building kayaks. It includes pictures of my boats and my customers' as well as helpful accounts of kayak building experiences. You will also find information for helping you choose an appropriate design to build. The Kayak Forum provides an active place to discuss techniques with other boat builders worldwide. Direct your web browser to www.guillemotkayaks.com to check out one of the best sites on the web.

Plans

Boat plans include all the forms and patterns drawn out at full size and individually. Generally you can glue the plans directly to your form material and cut out around the lines to assure no loss of accuracy.

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The instruction manual for all the strip-built designs is my book, *The Strip-Built Sea Kayak*. If you don't have experience building kayaks, I recommend that you purchase the book as well as the plans.

Kits

Kits are available for all Guillemot Kayaks designs. Although I do not manufacture the kits myself, several companies are licensed to create kits from my designs. Please visit my website for more information:

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DESIGN	Over All		At Waterline		Plans Price
	Length	Beam	Length	Beam	
LITTLE AUK	10 ft	28 in	9.5 ft	26.3 in	\$85
14 FOOT GREAT AUK	14	24.5	13.8	23.5	90
ADIRONDACK GUIDE BOAT	15.8	38.8	15.6	29.9	90
GUILLEMOT "S"	16	20	13.8	20.1	90
PLAY	16.5	22	14.4	21.7	85
GUILLEMOT	17	21	14.7	20.7	90
PETREL	17	20	15	19.9	100
GREAT AUK	17	24	16.6	22.7	90
S&G GUILLEMOT	17	21	15.2	20.7	60
MICROBOOTLEGGER	17.4	27	17.2	26.1	105
NIGHT HERON	18	20	16.1	19.6	90
S&G NIGHT HERON	18	20	16.2	19.4	110
HYBRID NIGHT HERON	18	20	16.2	19.4	110
GREENLAND NIGHT HERON	18	20	16.2	19.5	90
ALEUTESQUE	18	20	17.8	17.7	110
HIGH CAP. GREAT AUK	18	30	17.8	29.4	105
GUILLEMOT "L"	18	23	15.6	22.6	100
EXPEDITION SINGLE	19	21	16.7	20.7	100
RAZOR BILLED AUK	19	20	18.6	18.4	90
MYSTERY	20	20	19.9	17.4	100
GUILLEMOT DOUBLE	20	28	17.6	27.4	105
GREAT AUK DOUBLE	21	26	20.1	24.3	105
FAST DOUBLE	25.5	21	22.7	20.7	105

OTHER PRODUCTS

		Price
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PADDLE PLANS	Plans for making a kayak paddle	15
T-SHIRT	Guillemot logo on a grey shirt	15

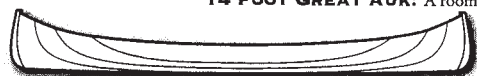
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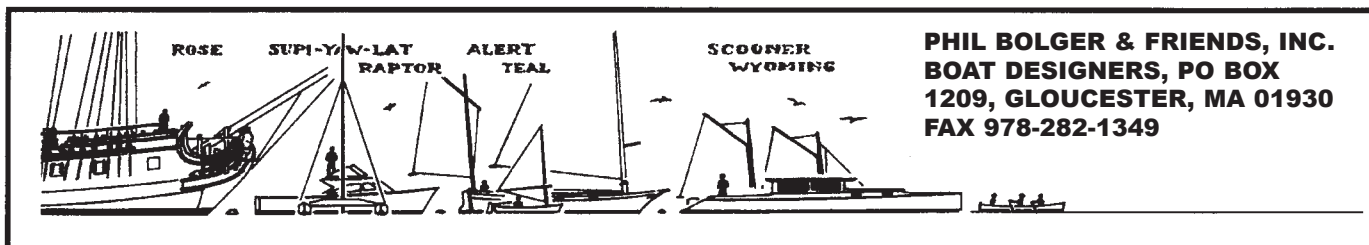
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Recently, just before Christmas '06, we quite unexpectedly received a letter and very satisfying photos from the Patons. Sometimes when we don't hear about such a sizable home-builder project we assume it to be more tactful not to inquire, as there can be quite a bit of tragedy associated with unfinished projects. But certainly not so in this case. Here are key excerpts from their missive from Fremantle, Western Australia:

"We owe you an apology and an update! We are sorry that we haven't let you know before now that Nimbus, as featured in *Different Boats* ("published in 1980 and out of print now," PB&F), was launched at the end of 1997. It took Jim nearly 20 years to get it to a launchable stage and get it into the water, and somewhere along the way we lost touch with you. Jim built it as a hobby when he wasn't playing golf and fishing and shooting, and otherwise amusing himself.

"Our GP says that with some boatbuilders it is the journey that is the important thing, not the destination. And I believe he is quite right. Jim just loves tinkering on board the boat. He is currently doing a refit in the main saloon. When we launched her, I prepared a set of photos for you, then managed to lose them as we gave up our shore base at that time.

She is very stable, doesn't pound, and upsets everyone in the marina when there is a howling gale and all the yachts are lying over on their ears. One neighboring boatie

Bolger on Design

Nimbus

Design #367 Steel
 Liveaboard Diesel Cruiser

Part 2 of 2

34'0" x 14a'0" x 3'5" x 11.74 Long Tons
 Displacement

came by after a particularly vicious and extended blow and was heard to mutter, "Your boat doesn't move, does it, just sits there like a big fat duck." We agreed, smugly.

She performs well, as expected, runs at 7kts with the Perkins 6354 at 1,600rpm, burning around five liters an hour ("1.25USgals/hr or 5.6mpg," PB&F). No wash to speak of. It will manage 8kts and a bit, with a tail wind and 9kts over a waterfall, Jim says. She likes weight. I think the heaviest she has been is around 14-15 tons, and she loved it.

Jim kept mainly to your plans with a few modifications, which he says I am not to reveal or you will get cross. The afterdeck, in the first few summers after launching, became the hub of activity after work with other liveaboards swimming up to perch on

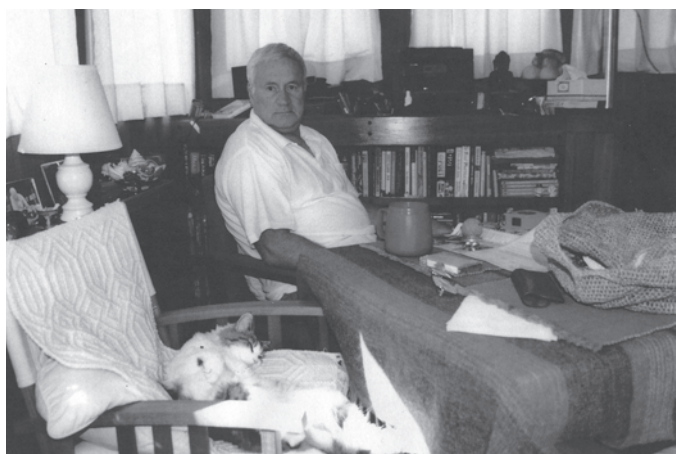
the deck or the marlin board. Many convivial hours were spent in this way, assisted by pina colodas, etc. Oh, and she has been recognized by several people as a Bolger design. Others, who don't recognize her provenance, simply stare at the sharp end and scratch their heads."

These photos certainly do the boat and their builders justice. One of the changes mentioned is the most appropriate addition of a spacious double berth in the forward cabin. And, after some study, the solid side of the flying bridge, initially assumed to be of wood stavings, appears to actually be somewhat translucent, indicating either canvas or a somewhat stiffer composite material of sorts. In such a leisurely construction period the builder's mind is prone to think up alterations and improvements...

What a nice job and a wonderful year's end surprise for us. As we are now heading past the shortest day of the season into the coldest weeks, it is good to be reminded that in Fremantle, Western Australia, the longest days are enjoyed afloat and the coming warmest weeks will invite extensive cruising. Susanne's claims that with proper gear and heated grips her motorcycling may continue through most of the winter sounds like a dubious substitute for the Paton's pursuits in these months...

Plans for Design #367 on 4 sheets are available from us for US \$400, postpaid, rolled in a tube.





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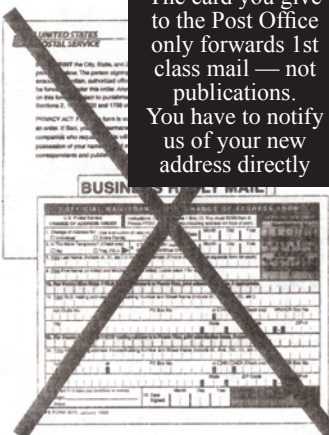
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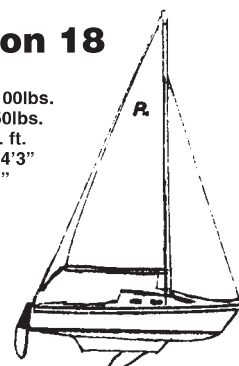
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Navigation is the art of getting from one place to another safely. An old joke has to do with the opinion that a ship's navigator knew where the ship had been but not where it was now because by the time the calculations had been made, the ship had moved elsewhere.

The advent of affordable GPS units brings the navigator closer to where the ship is at the time as long as the GPS unit is accurate. And with most affordable GPS units the accuracy is relative. The accuracy of the GPS reading is based on the constellation (satellites) available, the condition of the unit (including battery power level if the unit is handheld), the datum, and the projection settings of the unit.

Without getting too technical, if you have a UTM 16 chart and the GPS is reading in Geographic, you have a potential problem. There could also be an accuracy problem if the chart is using NAD 27 as the datum and the GPS unit is using NAD 83. In such cases, remember that the unit tells you where it is, which may not be where you think you are. If all the parts of the system and the chart are compatible, then you are probably within 100' of where the GPS unit says it is located. An accurate GPS unit (or a good LORAN) and current charts allow for a safer passage.

An example of the problem using a GPS was a disaster call the Florida State Warning Point received one day. It was reported that a barge full of fuel had run aground in Tampa Bay. Now while the State Warning Point is the emergency 911 contact place for all state-related problems, the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation and/or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission take care of on-the-water problems.

In this case, those responsible for the response called on the Division of Emergency Management's GIS Unit for maps of the area and possible response limitations. We plotted the GPS position of the barge on the chart for Tampa Bay and reported back that something was wrong. The barge had a loaded draft of 13' and the position put the barge in less than 8' of water and a good distance from the channel. In this case, the GPS unit's reading had either been misread or the information not transmitted correctly.

In another case, the reported GPS reading was accurate but the projection was set in State Plane West and those creating the map were working in Geographic. In both examples something was obviously wrong and the correction made. But on the water you may not have a back-up to check what you are reading. Hence, the GPS should be considered another tool and not the answer.

Nautical charts are used to identify where you are on the water, where is the safe water for your boat (i.e., depth exceeds draft), and other useful navigational information. Until a little while ago most nautical charts were paper and took up a good deal of storage room on a boat and needed room to use (the Apalachee Bay Chart is about 47"x35"). In fact, the U.S. Power Squadron's Public Boating Course had a formal session on how to fold the chart for practical use on a small boat. Then came the digital charts on specially built displays. Now, we have all the U.S. nautical charts available online for download (or use on the web).

Successful navigation also requires that you have the most current chart. The U.S. Coast Guard is reminding everyone that the date in the lower left corner of a chart represents the date to which changes were made.

From The Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

The National Ocean Service (NOS) has established a new policy that the date shown will only be the month and year that the chart was printed. Separate dates will be printed nearby indicating the date of the latest weekly "Notice to Mariners" corrections. If you are voyaging to areas other than your local waters, you might want to check the date the chart was printed/updated. If you want to update your current charts, you should go to the Coast Guard District web location to get updated information ("Local Notice to Mariners"). The general web site is <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/>.

Of even more use to us with web access is the ability to download the current chart electronically and then either have it on the laptop (which I do not own) or print it out for use. NOAA has made all its nautical charts available for review using an online chart view program at: <http://www.nauticalcharts.gov/viewer/>.

If you do not know what chart you want to look at you can go to the NOAA chart catalog at <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/> and click on the "Nautical Charts and Related Publications" on the left scroll bar. Then pick "Chart Catalog" and go from there (the State Option is a good approach).

One of the neat results of the electronic download is that you can enlarge and print only the area you are interested in navigating. For instance, I needed to know the channel out of a local harbor. On my large printed chart the area is a small insert. Using the electronic download I was able to enlarge the area (some of the detail blurred) and had a usable chart (8.5"x11" paper) for getting out through an unfamiliar (and twisting) channel.

When picking a chart, remember that the larger the scale (e.g., 1:100,000) less detail is available. The smaller the scale (e.g., 1:10,000) more detail is available. This is why enlarging a digital large scale chart is not as useful (in most circumstances). If possible, you should download a small scale chart of the area if such is available. In my example of the channel I needed there was no small scale chart of the area and I was stuck with enlarging the large scale chart and working with the results.

In addition to electronic access to the nautical charts, NOAA also provides information on tides, currents, or the like at http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/data_menu.shtm. And the Coast Pilot has information on channel depths, bridge clearance, restricted areas, and other items of interest to those using the water. Each of the Coast Pilot publications (nine separate publications) can be found in a good government publications library, ordered from most nautical book stores, or downloaded from the NOAA web site at <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/cpdownload.htm>.

You can also make your own local charts using various sites available on the web and your local knowledge. For example, we used to launch our boat at a good, all tides boat ramp near Spring Creek. While the ramp was great, the channel out to Apalachee Bay was not well marked. In fact, my first "chart" of the channel was drawn on the back of an envelope by the ramp owner. Now this was before the days of web access, TerraServer,

Google Earth, and other such sources, so I resorted to using standard black and white air photos obtained from the Florida Department of Transportation. We checked the photo run indexes and found the latest run that covered the area. I asked for prints when time was available and went on my way.

About a month later I received a phone call that my prints were ready to be picked up. I went by the office, paid the reproduction charge (you may save a good deal of money if you are not in a hurry and the staff can fit the request in with other work), and had my prints. The reason for the air photos was that all the oyster bars showed (the flight happened to be on a low tide day) and I had a base from which to make my tracing and course notes. I elicited the help of the local U.S. Power Squadron to check the channel depths and accuracy of the constructed "chart." They received credit for the work and I had my chart.

An accurate navigational chart? No. A useful tool to get in and out through a poorly marked channel? Yes. Even though the finished work was boldly marked "INFORMATION ONLY, NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL USE," it was reproduced by the marina operator and distributed to his clients since it was the best there was at the time.

With the web sources available today the same type of local chart creation can be done at less cost, but you will still need to go out on the water and make sure that what you have created is relatively accurate. I would suggest a shallow draft boat and a rising tide so if you made a mistake the boat can float off as you amend your "chart."


Successful navigation also requires some idea of what to do when. One of the more technical publications is *The American Practical Navigator* (Bowditch to most of us) is available on the web at: http://pollux.nss.nima.mil/pubs/pubs_japn_sections.html?rid=187 (Choose "Publications" on the left hand scroll bar, then use the scroll box in the middle of the next screen to access the publication.) It is also available in hard copy with a CD enclosed. The 2002 Bicentennial Edition has been released by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency.

Originally published in 1802, the book has undergone numerous revisions and updating as the art of navigation became better known and more tools became available to the navigator. The CD-ROM version of the work has the full text of the printed book plus electronic enhancements not possible in book form. The CD-ROM requires Adobe Acrobat 5.05 (or later) to have all the tables and illustrations display properly. In addition, you may need to visit the Microsoft web site to download the CODEC's (compressor/decompressor) needed to view the videos. The CD does carry Windows Media Player 7 which is required to view some of the material.

The word of warning when using a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is that the URL may be changed or discontinued. If any of the URLs given in this article do not load, go to the root and work your way back in looking for the subject area of interest (i.e., www.nauticalcharts.gov).

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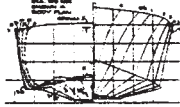
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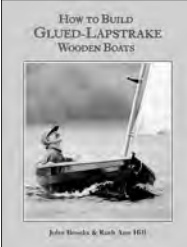


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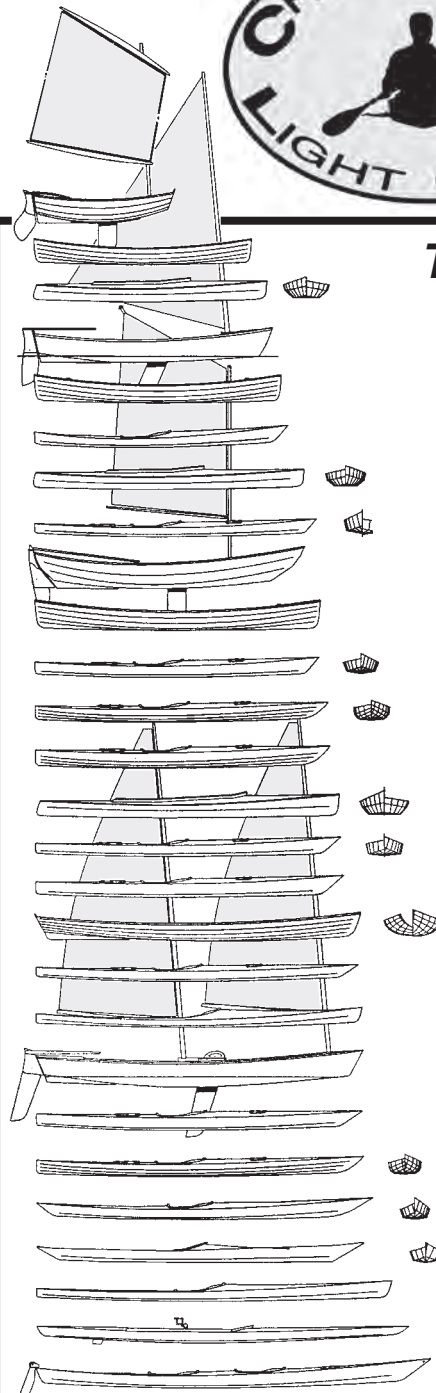
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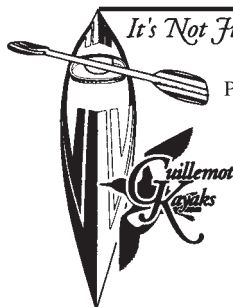
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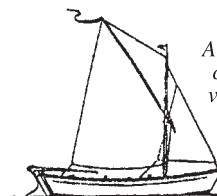


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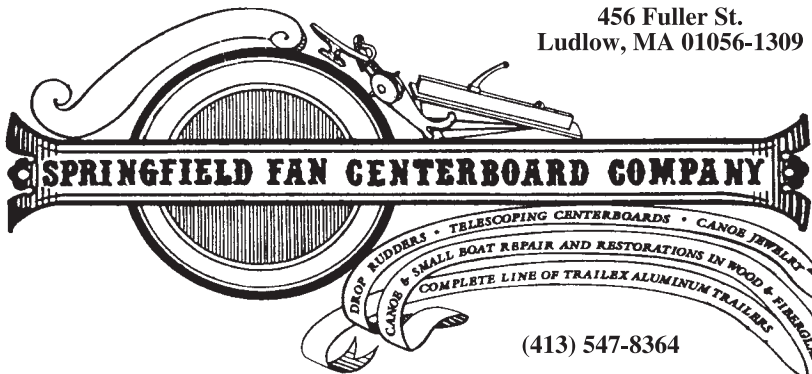
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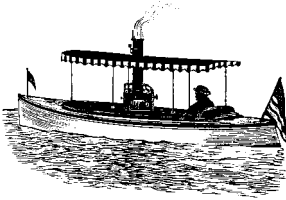
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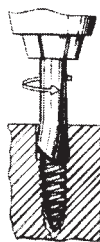
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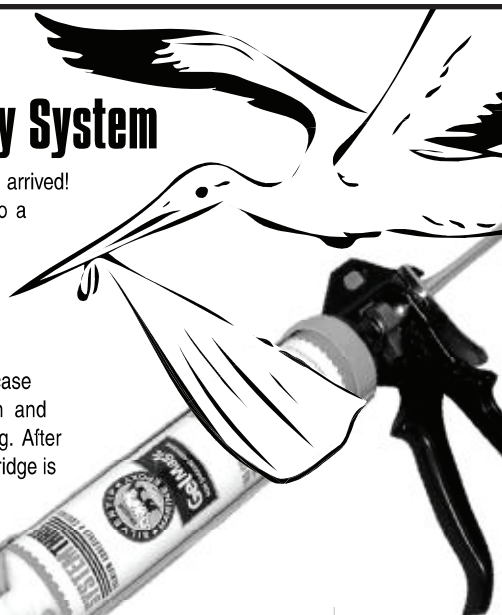
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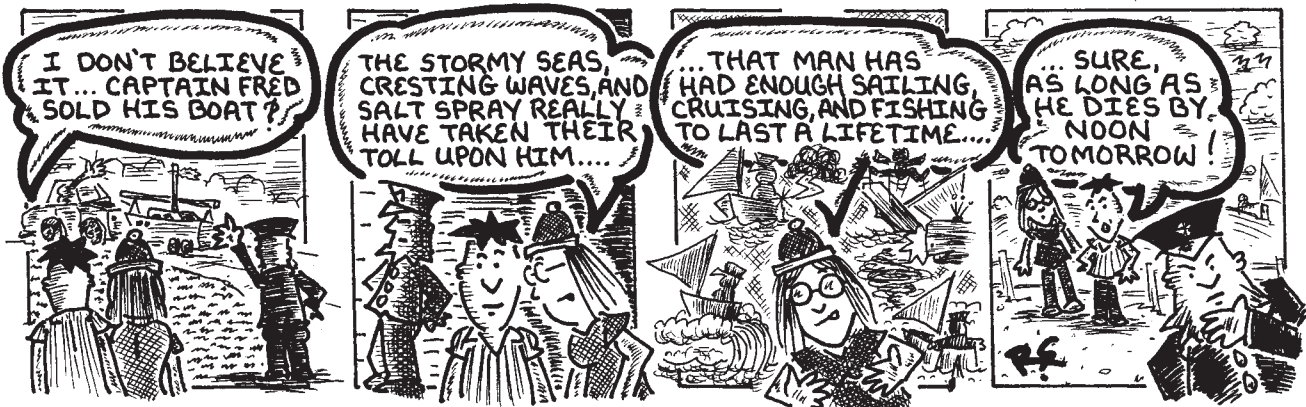
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